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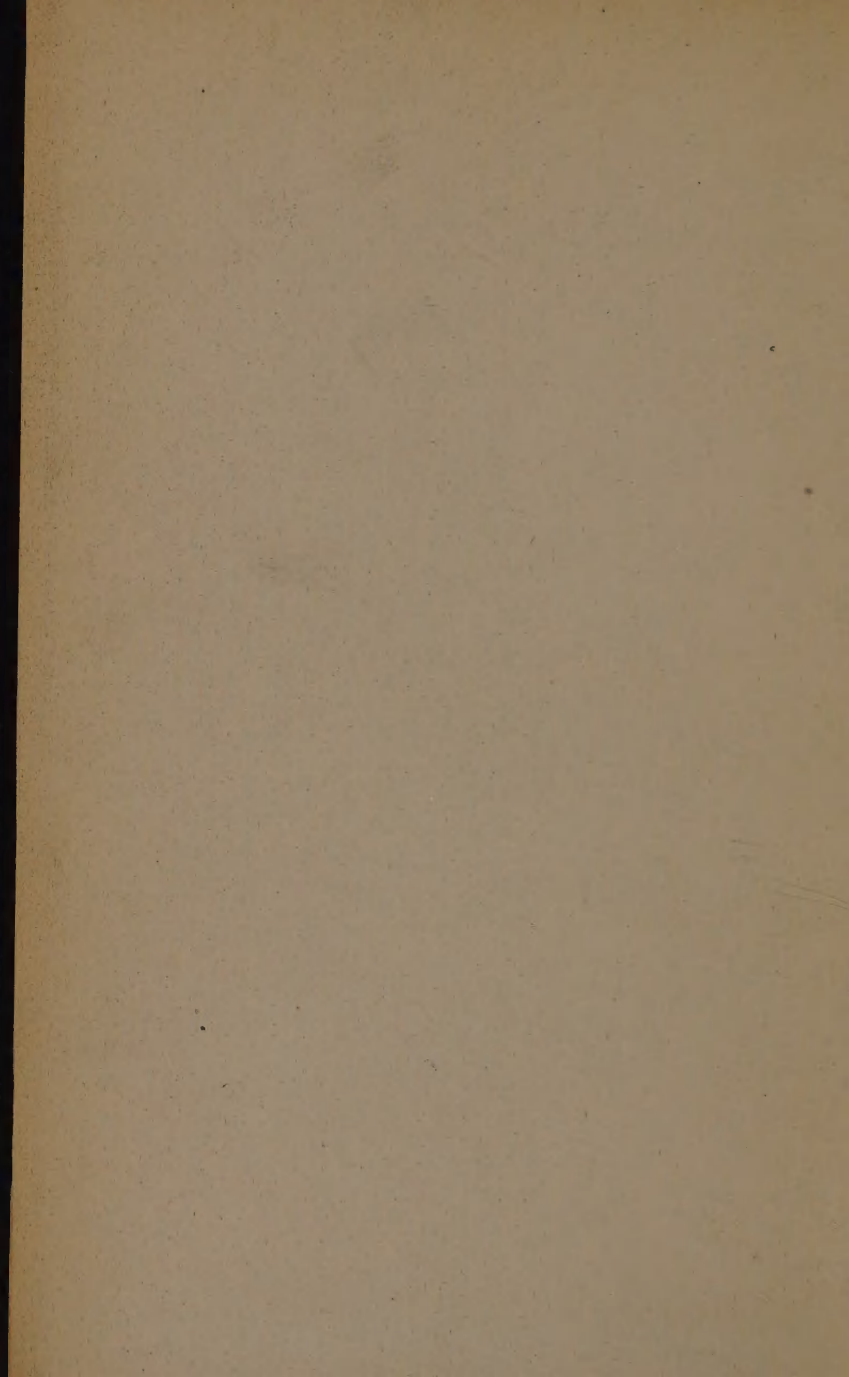
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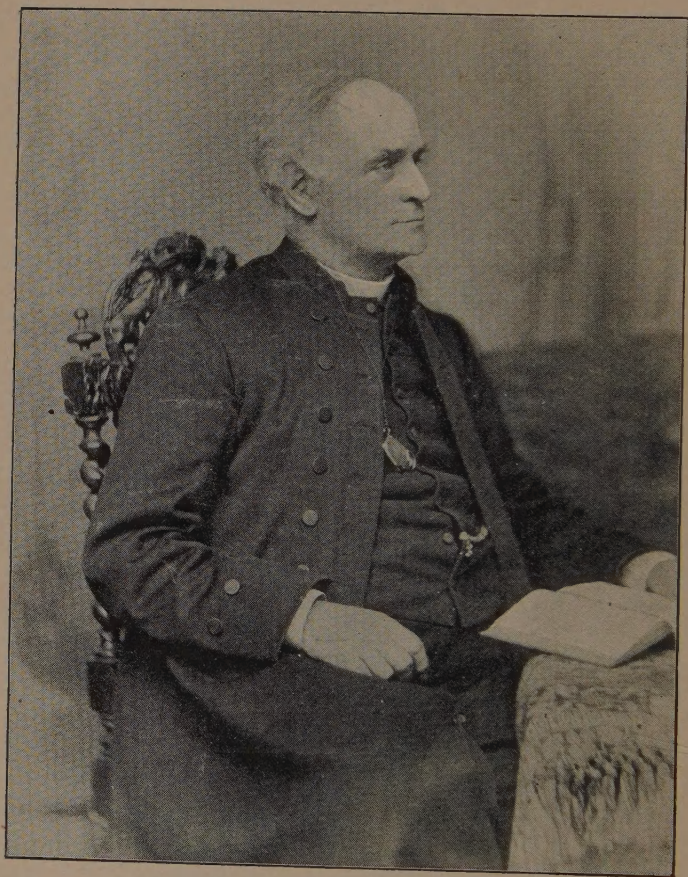
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RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS  
OF  
SOME NOTED BISHOPS

DIVINES AND WORTHIES OF  
THE "OLD CHURCH" OF MANCHESTER

BY  
GEORGE HUNTINGTON, M.A.

RECTOR OF TENBY

AUTHOR OF "JOHN BROWN THE CORDWAINER," "AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
OF AN ALMS-BAG," ETC. ETC.

FORSAN ET HÆC OLIM MEMINISSE JUVABIT

*NEW EDITION*

JOHN HODGES  
BEDFORD STREET, STRAND, LONDON

1896

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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MOST of these Sketches have appeared in some of our best-known magazines, and are reprinted, with additions, through the kindness of the Publishers. They are in no sense intended for religious biographies; and the writer flatters himself that his readers will hardly be able to guess to which theological school he belongs, or if he belongs to any. His wish is to make some good men and true stand out as their cotemporaries knew them, and to recall them to fond recollection before memory grows dim and circumstances altogether changed. Perhaps some may agree with the great Latin poet, although not in quite the same sense: *Forsan et hæc olim meminisse iuvabit.*



# CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I. A GREAT HEADMASTER AND BISHOP : JAMES PRINCE LEE, D.D., FIRST BISHOP OF MANCHESTER, . . . . .	9
II. A LARGE-HEARTED PRELATE : JAMES FRASER, D.D., SECOND BISHOP OF MANCHESTER, . . . . .	37
III. A MODEL BISHOP : SAMUEL WILBERFORCE, D.D., SUCCESSIVELY BISHOP OF OXFORD AND WIN- CHESTER, . . . . .	58
IV. A PROFOUND AND HUMOROUS PRELATE : CONNOP THIRLWALL, D.D., BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S, . . . . .	79
V. A GEORGE HERBERT OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY : BIRKETT OF ST. FLORENCE, . . . . .	107
VI. AN ORIGINAL PEMBROKESHIRE PARSON : SMITH OF GUMFRESTON, . . . . .	129
VII. A GREAT YORKSHIRE VICAR : WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK, D.D., VICAR OF LEEDS, AND DEAN OF CHICHESTER, . . . . .	151
VIII. A GOOD ARCHDEACON : JOHN ALLEN, ARCHDEACON OF SALOP, . . . . .	180
IX. A GREAT HYMNOLOGIST : JOHN MASON NEALE, D.D., FOUNDER OF ST. MARGARET'S, EAST GRIN- STEAD, . . . . .	198

	PAGE
X. A SWEET SINGER OF ISRAEL: J. B. DYKES, MUS. DOC., VICAR OF ST. OSWALD'S, DURHAM, .	224
XI. A DEAR OLD DEAN: G. H. BOWERS, D.D., DEAN OF MANCHESTER, . . . . .	249
XII. A GENIAL PRINCIPAL: RICHARD PARKINSON, D.D., PRINCIPAL OF ST. BEES, AND CANON OF MANCHESTER,	263
XIII. AN OLD-FASHIONED CHURCHMAN: CECIL DANIEL WRAY, CANON OF MANCHESTER, . . . . .	283
XIV. AN ODD MINOR CANON: W. W. JOHNSON, MINOR CANON OF MANCHESTER, . . . . .	295
XV. A BATCH OF OLD CHURCH WORTHIES: GEORGE PILKINGTON — WILLIAM ANDREW — HUMPHREY NICHOLS—DR. JOHN BOUTFLOWER, . . . . .	300

# RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS.

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## I.

### A Great Headmaster and Bishop:

JAMES PRINCE LEE, D.D.,

FIRST BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.

MY earliest recollections of Bishop Lee date from the foundation of the diocese in 1847, although I was not personally introduced to him till my ordination as deacon in 1848. It is a matter of history that the separation of the See of Manchester from that of Chester was formulated in 1837, but with the prospective sacrifice of one of the Welsh dioceses ; a mischievous measure happily defeated by the piety and energy of the then Earl of Powis, and by the powerful reasoning of Bishop Thirlwall of St. David's. So that by Act 10 Vict., Bangor and St. Asaph were to be left 'undisturbed,' and Manchester 'to be founded notwithstanding.'

Perhaps these circumstances caused an unusual curiosity as to the clergyman on whom the appointment would be conferred, not untempered with anxiety, when the kind of men selected by the then Premier, Lord John Russell, were considered. A good many names had been canvassed, the wish, perhaps, being father to the thought. Among these were Dr. Hook, Dr. Parkinson, and Dr. Molesworth, the then vicar of Rochdale, any one of whom would have been acceptable. Sanguine Evangelicals too, discussed the chances of the two stalwart Protestant champions, the Rev. Hugh Stowell and the Rev Hugh M'Neil; and I hardly think that public opinion was quite pleased when it was officially announced that the lot had fallen on a Birmingham schoolmaster, however eminent. And stories were current that the Bishop elect was indebted to the special recommendation of the Prince Consort, in consequence of the favourable impression made on H.R.H.'s mind by his reception by Mr. Lee at Birmingham, and by the magnificent oration he pronounced on the occasion. Be that as it may, Cambridge scholars soon learnt that he had been a Fellow of Trinity and Craven scholar, and, according to Whewell's critical judgment, second to none in the University; that he had subsequently become a Rugby master under Arnold, and later on headmaster of King Edward's School, Birmingham.

His position as the head of a great educational



system was indeed so unique, that he might well have said *nolo episcopari* in the sense in which Whewell is reported to have replied to some one who talked to him of being *raised* to the bench. 'Sir, there are twenty-six bishops; there is only *one* Master of Trinity.' There cannot be a doubt, however, that Lee entered on his new responsibilities with the same stern resolution which characterised him all along; yet one can hardly think of him without recalling Virgil's well-known saying, *O fortunati nimium sua si bona norint*, for the very qualities which fitted him to be a great schoolmaster, were hardly the fittest to make him a great bishop. 'As a schoolmaster, at the head of a great system,' wrote Dean Vaughan, who was with him at Rugby, 'he was wonderful. As a bishop, he attempted despotism, and the despotism of bishops is incongruous and out of date.'

An old college friend, to whom he had offered a mastership at King Edward's, told me of his vast erudition, of his stern discipline, of the marvellous way he had of getting at the hearts of the best boys, and of the terror he was to dunces, and also of a constitutional waywardness of temper, which made you not quite know how he would receive you. So that it is hardly to be wondered at that I, and I daresay a good many besides me, entered his presence for our examinations with a certain amount of trepidation. There had been a sort of interregnum, so that the

candidates had accumulated, and in all we numbered forty-four deacons and priests. We met in one of the schoolrooms belonging to the cathedral, so as to be near at hand, and one by one we were admitted into a separate apartment, where sat his lordship alone, with a table before him, on which, if I remember right, lay his watch, a small hand-bell, and, as it turned out, a Greek Testament. The surroundings were homely enough, but the Bishop himself impressed us with feelings approaching awe. There was an unmistakable dignity in his appearance and bearing, which, although somewhat scholastic, could not fail to do so. At the time he must have been about forty-four or forty-five, although he looked older. In stature he was a little above the middle height, his head was shapely and intellectual, covered with crisp, curly hair, giving him the appearance of an old Roman patrician; his lips were thin, his mouth firm, the curves drawn into a smile if anything pleased him, severe and sarcastic if he were angered.

But he reminded me most of a great mediæval prelate—Stephen Langton, for example, or even of the mighty Hildebrand. And this resemblance was drawn out by a *jeu d'esprit* of some ritualistic wags, who managed to get a photograph of him taken in cope and mitre, and with a pastoral staff in his hand, for which, of course, he never sat. Certainly he looked every inch a prelate. He kept this picture

on his drawing-room table, and years after I saw it there. It was on an occasion when I was having luncheon with him after I had sketched out for him a plan of the then projected Diocesan Calendar.

So I ventured to say to him, 'I never saw your lordship look so well.'

'I daresay,' he replied, 'you would like me to adopt that habit.'

'Indeed I should, my lord.'

'And I should have no objection if it were the legal one.'

I thought to myself, There's as much authority for that as for the habit which the *Church Times* called the 'magpie'; and if anything could give dignity to that somewhat ladylike costume, it would be the way Bishop Lee put it on, or rather, had it put on for him by his valet always, and the way he wore it over his full silk cassock, and with his shoes and silver buckles. But I am anticipating.

When I went into the examination room, I was desired to be seated. An old, badly printed, contracted Greek Testament was placed in my hands, and I was told to read and construe wherever the book fell open. His questions, however, were fair and testing; and as I acted on the advice of the Rev. William Scott of Hoxton, a well-known scholar and divine, editor of the *Christian Remembrancer*, which had superseded Newman's *British Critic*, the friend of

Pusey and Keble and A. J. B. Hope, I came off, I am proud to say, with a commendation on the extent of my reading, although with a significant rider. My *fidus Achates* had said to me, 'Be sure and be well up in your Greek Testament, and Lee will never pluck you. Don't give any opinion of your own, but quote the *ipsissima verba* of the articles and formularies in Latin, if your memory serves you.' The 'rider' was given with somewhat of a grim smile, and it was this: 'My chaplain tells me that he has not been able to find out your opinions from your papers.' I did not say what another candidate did, 'Opinions, my lord?—why, at my time of life I do not venture to have any opinions;' I only bowed and said nothing. The Bishop slightly inclined his head, touched a hand-bell on the table, and as I went out another candidate went in. Thus my interview ended, not without an act of thanksgiving on my part. I did not get on so well with the chaplain. As a 'suspect,' I had some leading questions put to me on Article XI., etc. But I had attended Dr. Parkinson's lectures, and my great authority was Bishop Bull, so there is no wonder that I was not considered orthodox. No harm, however, came of it. The chaplain was a good man of a somewhat pronounced evangelicalism.

Many years after, my acquaintance with Bishop Bull served me a good turn. When my learned and devout curate, the Rev. E. F. Willis, was at Abergwili

for priest's orders, the then chaplain reported him to Bishop Thirlwall as somewhat heterodox on the Ninth Article. 'Where,' said his lordship, 'did you obtain your singular ideas?' 'From the writings of your lordship's illustrious predecessor, Bishop Bull.' 'Can you give me the references?' at the same time taking from his shelves a folio copy. 'Yes, here it is in his treatise on *The State of Man before the Fall*.' The Bishop put on his spectacles, looked at the passage. 'I will not trouble you any further,' and so he dismissed Mr. Willis.

To return to Bishop Lee. How he loved to meet a real scholar, and how one would have liked to witness the interview between him and his distinguished pupils Lightfoot and Westcott, previous to their ordination. Possibly, however, it may have been as brief as that between Dr. Phillpotts, when chaplain of Bishop Van Mildert of Durham, and the subsequently celebrated Dr. W. Hodge Mill, at the time Senior Classic and Fellow of Trinity. 'Mr. Mill, the cathedral service is at — o'clock, and the Bishop hopes you will do him the honour to dine at the Palace.' 'But,' said the astonished candidate, 'I've passed no examination.' 'There will be none in your case, unless you will *condescend to examine us*,' was the rejoinder.

Dr. Lee was unapproachable as an orator on the classical model. When he spoke, he planted himself

firmly on his feet, and advanced or receded a step or two when he emphasised any word or sentence ; his action was limited to his right hand, like that of the ancient Greeks ; his mouth, perhaps, more than his eyes, betrayed his passing feeling ; his management of his voice was perfect, for he articulated the consonants distinctly, so that you heard him clearly over the largest buildings, when more sonorous speakers could hardly be heard at all. A Christian orator you could scarcely call him, for, magnificent as were his orations,—for they were orations,—they failed to touch your sympathies, however they might win your admiration and convince your reason. You could not compare him with Bishop Wilberforce nor with Archbishop Magee, and hardly, though more approximately, with Bishop Moorhouse ; of ancient orators, he resembled Cicero more than Demosthenes. But, in the clearness of his comprehension, in the selection of his words, in the aptness of his illustrations, in the copiousness of his quotations, he was absolutely without a rival. Then you prized both what he said and how he said it, and all the more because he was so rarely heard in the pulpit or on the platform ; so that, in spite of his oratorical powers, he was what Bishop Latimer would have called ‘an unpreaching prelate.’ In fact, he reserved his speeches for great occasions, and he almost gave you the impression of having prepared them too carefully ; but then, the doing of what he had to



do *well* was one of the great points in his character. And, ready as he was, you would have liked to hear from him a few simple words addressed to simple people; for, even in his confirmation addresses, he would introduce questions on Biblical criticism and research, some of them useful and suggestive, but hardly suited to such occasions. In one of these addresses, I remember, he illustrated the accuracy of the Evangelist's description of the stone being *rolled* to and from the entrance to our Lord's sepulchre, by the discovery of some great circular stones near the supposed site, which could only be moved by being rolled along. He grew quite animated as he told the candidates this, more animated, I am afraid, than they were.

His ordination addresses were most valuable, especially when he spoke on the study of Holy Scripture. They were not touching and pathetic, like those, for example, never-to-be-forgotten ones of Bishop Wilberforce and Bishop Woodford; but he was solemnly earnest in conferring holy orders. I shall not easily forget the occasion when he asked me to be one of the presbyters to join with him in the laying on of hands in the cathedral.

How one wishes he had been spared to take part in the New Testament Revision; and how valuable would have been his share in the work we can best guess from his eminent qualifications, and from the

actual labours of his noted pupils, Drs. Lightfoot and Westcott. Of the interest he took in such questions the clerkly Dr. Dewes gives a remarkable proof. In his preface to his *Life and Letters of St. Paul*, Dr. Dewes writes: 'A long interview was closed by the words, "As your Bishop I tell you, that if you do not continue the work you have begun, you will be culpably neglecting the gifts God has given you."'

It was strange that, with all his learning, he never published anything but two Charges and two Sermons. I once expressed to him my deep regret that he would bequeath no writings to the world. 'No,' he said; 'I do not care to publish.' Thereupon I blundered into about as unpardonable a piece of *malapropos* as any one could be guilty of. I really had been very much touched by what he had said, so, quoting Shakespeare, and forgetting for the moment the application, I said, 'He dies and makes no sign' (*Henry VI.*, act iii. scene 3). All the Bishop said was, 'If to leave no literary remains is to die and make no sign, I must submit to my fate; but I do not think that my thoughts will perish with me, for there are some who will not, I trust, forget what they have learnt from me.' How prophetic were these words I did not know at the time. One has only to think of his illustrious pupils, Benson, Lightfoot, Westcott, and Vaughan, to appreciate their truth. He talked at the same time of the way in which the

thoughts of others are so appropriated as to be unconsciously reproduced as original.

He told me, too, that he was not conscious of forgetting anything. I said, 'How you are to be envied!' He replied, 'There are many things I could wish to forget.' I could not help wishing that he had forgotten one or two disquieting circumstances; but in some, with which the public were not concerned, he was much misjudged.

He seldom missed an opportunity of teaching. One day at Mauldeth, he said to me, 'I wonder how many of those who read yesterday's epistle (21st Sunday after Trinity) could follow St. Paul's figures of the Roman warrior and his armour.' And with that he stood up, put himself into the attitude of a Prætorian Guard, and illustrated each part of the panoply in turn, as if he were wearing it. He then opened a book of classical illustrations lying on the table, and showed the different kinds of shields in use. On the same occasion he repeated the injunction he had given me at my ordination, never to let a day pass without studying the Greek Testament.

But I must let others speak of him infinitely better able to judge than I can be. Archbishop Benson, one of his old pupils, says of him: 'We recognised magnificent power, wide interests, large sympathy, inexhaustible freshness, stern justice, and, above all, invincible faith in the laws of thought and in the laws

of language.' Another pupil, the Rev. Canon Evans, who subsequently became his son-in-law, and one of his successors as headmaster of King Edward's, writes : ' It is, I think, *quite impossible* for a stranger, or perhaps for any one, except a Birmingham pupil, to understand the complete devotion and affection which some of us felt towards him. He was, I think, the most truthful man I ever knew. I do not believe that he ever knowingly was guilty of the slightest deviation from the simple truth. His marvellous accuracy in scholarship seemed to run through his whole nature. This quality in him perhaps caused him to be very severe in his judgment and treatment of those whom he thought untrustworthy.'

And Bishop Westcott : ' He enabled us to see that scholarship is nothing less than one method of dealing with the whole problem of human existence, in which art and truth and goodness are inextricably combined. Like Arnold, too, he trusted his boys, and was rarely, if ever, deceived.

The late Bishop Lightfoot wrote : ' I have sometimes thought that if I were allowed to live one hour only of my past life over again, I would choose a Butler lesson under Lee.' ' His conversation,' adds Dean Vaughan, ' was delightful, full of sparkle, full of salt alike in wit and in a playful mischievousness about stupid and pretentious people.'

Another old Birmingham pupil told me : ' It is

hardly possible to describe what he was in his lighter moments. A torrent of fun and illustration, dog Latin, anecdotes full of dates and names, fag ends of ballads, epigrams, and plays, always clever and to the point, would follow one another without intermission.'

But I am bound to say that he did not indulge the clergy with these gems. He kept us at a distance, and treated us too much like schoolboys. An autocrat he certainly was.

Our intercourse with Bishop Lee was chiefly confined to visits of business to St. James's Square. Ah! who will ever forget that dreary office, how we sat kicking our heels in the outer room anxiously waiting till the little hand-bell sounded from the 'inner chamber,' and our names were called out by the chief clerk. On what principle we were admitted I could never make out. Seemingly, not alphabetically, nor according to the order of our arrival. I have known curates from the country sit in that wretched place for hours, listening to the scratching of the clerks' pens, only to see the Bishop's back as he entered his carriage to drive away. Some were called in quickly, and got rid of as quickly. Of one thing we clerics were fully aware, and that was that we had no chance of an interview so long as any laymen were waiting. A friend of mine was once kept waiting long after his dinner-hour. He ventured to complain, whereupon the Bishop produced some biscuits out of a paper

parcel, the only comestibles, by the way, he ever allowed himself, however protracted his time. My friend tried to munch one, but a crumb stuck in his throat and set him coughing. The Bishop looked across the table at him. 'You do not seem, Mr. E., to enjoy your biscuit.' 'It is very dry.' The Bishop rang for a glass of water, which Mr. E. gulped down, and then bolted the remains of the biscuit. It *was* very dry, so was his way of telling the story—dry humour.

But that office witnessed an amazing amount of work. To cite the Primate again: 'His devotion to work was unwearying and unresting. His first day's work in his high office done after noon on the day that office was conferred, and some of his heaviest days' work done when he was sick already unto death; his only respite change of work; no day of idleness ever self-allowed; ever open to fresh business, never so pleased as when a sudden emergency found him quite ready and keen to undertake it.'

Fifty years after leaving school, Bishop Westcott says, in a speech delivered at the opening of a girls' Grammar School in connection with King Edward's at Birmingham, January 22, 1893: 'An old boy never grows old; he is young still. There are some things that never feel the touch of age. The presence, the expression, the voice, the manner of my old master, have lost nothing of their vivid power by the lapse of half a century. I can



recall, as if it were from a lesson of yesterday, the richness and force of the illustrations with which he brought home to us a battle scene of Thucydides, or a landscape of Virgil, or a sketch of Tacitus ; I can recall the eloquence with which he discoursed on great problems of life and thought suggested by some favourite passage of Butler's *Analogy* ; I can recall the depths which he opened to us in the unfathomable fulness of the apostolic words ; I can recall the appeals he made to the noblest instincts in us, revealing us to ourselves in crises of our school life and the life of the nation. We might be able to follow him or not ; as we grew older we might agree with particular opinions which he expressed, or we might not ; but at least our souls were touched, we felt a little more of the claims of duty, a little more of the possibilities of life, a little more of what in God's providence might lie before us. And when I look back upon all he did, and all he suggested, in the light of my own long experience as a teacher, I seem to be able to discern something of his secret, something of that secret of the teacher's influence at all times. Let me try to tell you, as simply as I can, what I recall. First, then, he claimed that we should be from the very beginning his fellow-workers. He made us feel that in all learning we must not be receptive only, but active, that the true learner learns only if he thinks, just as the teacher

can teach only as he learns. He encouraged us to collect, to arrange, to examine such simple facts as lay within the range of our own reading, that he might always use the results in dealing with some larger problem. In this way, little by little, we gained a direct acquaintance with the instruments and methods of criticism, and came to know something of confident joy in using them. We were delighted to discover a little thing which we each could severally do, something which we could render as a service, some offering which we could make to the fulness of the work in which we were engaged. And then this feeling was deepened by his own kingly independence. In those days we were doing for the most part nothing but simple Greek and Latin texts—rather shabby editions of Tauchnitz or Trubner—well, without note or comment. A very difficult phrase, therefore was a problem to us, and grammars and lexicons were the only instruments at hand for the solution of it. But we were trained to recognise the elements with which we had to deal, trained to acknowledge great principles of interpretation. Such discipline, you will easily understand, could not fail to upraise and to stimulate. And lest our zeal should flag, such English commentaries as there were at the time, were used to hold up for us terrible warnings against the neglect of absolute thoroughness and accuracy. For Mr. Lee—and that was the name by

which we delighted to think of him to the last—had an intense belief in the exact force of language. A word as he regarded it had its own peculiar history, and conveyed its own precise message. A structural form conveyed a definite idea. In translating, we were bound to see that every syllable gave its testimony. It might be possible, or it might not be possible, to transfer directly into English the exact shade of meaning conveyed by the original text ; but at least we were required to take account of the minutest turns of expression, required to seek at least for some equivalent for their force, required at least to recognise the loss which was sustained in our own renderings. And if I were to select one endowment which I have found most precious to me in the whole work of life, I should select the absolute belief in the force of words which I gained through the strictest verbal criticism. Belief in words is finally belief in thought, belief in men. Belief in words is a guide to the apprehension of the prophetic element in the works of genius. The deeper teachings of poetry are not disposed of by the superficial question, "Did the writer mean all that?" No, we boldly answer ; but he said it because he saw the truth which he did not, and perhaps at the time he could not, consciously analyse. But the strictest precision of scholarship was never allowed by our master to degenerate into pedantry. Scholarship was our training, and

let me confess, as belonging to the Dark Ages, I have found no better yet. But he pressed every incident of art, science, history, or travel into its service. When we came back from the holidays, the welcome question was, "Well, what have you read? what have you seen?" The reward for a happy answer was to be commissioned to fetch some precious volume from his library,—I looked on the shelves this morning, and I could see the places of well-remembered books,—so that we might fix some thought by a new association. And in this way again we gained a knowledge of great books; and there is, I believe, something elevating even in that outward acquaintanceship. Then came lectures on art, archæology, and physics, which he enabled the senior boys to attend. These lectures opened to us new regions, and stirred in us that generous wonder which is the condition of wisdom.'

Two faults were easily and readily found with him, and they were these—that he expected to find all men as constantly prepared for him as he was for them, and that he knew not the value of a holiday. The Bishop of Chichester says, 'Placed far above his fellows in intellectual capacity, with gifts which even the extremity of bodily weakness could not quench or even impair, he devoted himself entirely and without reserve to the labours of his office.' And Mr. Dudley Ryder, the registrar of the diocese, writing to

Bishop Fraser before his consecration, says : ' The late Bishop, up to within a few days of his death, was working. He consecrated a church six days before he died.'

I do not think, when we felt aggrieved at the curtness of his manner, we made due allowance for what was found out afterwards, that he suffered for years from painful illness, which he bore like a Stoic, perhaps more than like a martyr. But, stern as he was to outsiders, he was not without sympathy. He had a deep affection for the late Canon Stowell, and, seemingly differing in tastes and habits, their respect was mutual. The Bishop once sent for me. I had not a notion what for. When I was shown in, he rose and extended his hand in, for him, an unusually friendly way. ' I have sent for you,' he said, ' to ask you to go and see Canon Stowell, who, I am grieved to say, is very ill.' ' Certainly, my lord,' I assented ; ' I will go to please you.' ' No, not to please me, but as an act of Christian duty and respect.' His voice faltered as he said this, and there were tears in his eyes. I am thankful, looking back all those years, that the Bishop asked me, and that I went. It was a lesson I could not have afforded to lose. Men like Hugh Stowell and Hugh M'Neill were powers in the northern province, and the Church was poorer for their removal. They were born orators, and held Lancashire audiences spellbound. If they formed

the originals of Mr. Punch's 'Ye Protestant clergyman denouncing ye Pope,' might they not have said, 'Have we not a cause?' They were manly, fearless men. I shall not forget a speech of Stowell's on 'Scriptural *versus* Secular Education,' in the Town Hall, in opposition to Mr. or Dr. James Watts. The reverend orator was at his best, and I was so carried away by his impassioned eloquence, that I found myself standing on the top of a form, waving a topper hat over my head, and bawling out as loud as my lungs would permit, 'Stowell for ever!'

Dr. M'Neill's greatest hit was when, in the presence of the Bishop of Chester, who had delivered a charge on the same subject, and the then Lord Stanley, he exclaimed (quoting *Marmion*), 'Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!' pointing to each in turn. The effect was electrifying. I wish we had such orators now, even if they did 'denounce ye Pope.'

At Canon Stowell's funeral, we all were afraid that the Bishop would break down. Many people thought that the loss of his friend had a serious influence on his subsequent health and strength, and that it was the beginning of the end.

It need not be said that he was punctual both in answering letters and in keeping his engagements. People who saw him driving into Manchester with his carriage and purple liveries used to take out their watches and minute him; and he arrived at St.

James's Square to the moment. On one occasion, however, he missed his train when returning to Manchester from a confirmation tour. A friend of mine walked down with him to Preston Station, just in time to hear the engine whistle, and the train steam out. 'Mr. Palmour,' said his lordship, 'may I ask you to send a telegram to my coachman at Victoria Station?' 'What shall I say, my lord?' 'Train late.' 'Train late?' interposed the clergyman; 'I can hardly send that, for it started just half a minute before its time. Had I not better say "missed the train"?' 'It would be more correct,' replied his lordship, who was accurate in all he said as well as did.

He was a splendid organiser, and knew all that went on in his vast diocese. Some of us thought he knew a little too much, and would have been glad to be left more to ourselves.

Those were not the days of ubiquitous bishops, and the average parson, especially in remote districts, never expected to see the diocesan unless some grave fault had to be found. One old-fashioned parson told me that 'he thanked God he never had a bishop in his church.' Well, one day a complaint had been made to Dr. Lee of some so-called 'ritualistic practices,' to which some cantankerous parishioners objected. So the Bishop made up his mind to see for himself; and, being in the

neighbourhood, he drove over, leaving his carriage at the village inn. Well, he dropped into the churchwardens' pew, under the gallery, and hoped not to be recognised, muffled up as he was in his overcoat. But the vicar's friend and churchwarden spotted him, and so, as the parson was going up the pulpit stairs, out he crept from the pew and whispered in the minister's ear, 'Bishop, sir—Bishop in church—Bishop in our pew.' 'Ask his lordship,' quoth the parson, 'to give the benediction.' 'I'm not in my robes,' replied the Bishop, when the application was made. So back goes the churchwarden to the pulpit, and back again to the pew, and after another whispering, 'Please, my lord, our minister says the people mustn't go without your blessing.' A pause, perhaps rather a long one, and then uprose his lordship, and his clear accents were heard from the pew pronouncing the blessing. In the vestry, Dr. Lee said, 'Mr. —, you took me at a disadvantage in asking me to pronounce the benediction when I am not here in my official character.' This was not unwelcome news for the parson, for if the Bishop was not there officially, how could he overhaul him? So he said, 'The rubric does not say a word about your lordship's official character; all it says is, "The Bishop, if he be present, shall let them depart with his blessing."' 'All's well that ends well.' His lordship found that the complaints were ex-



aggrated, an explanation took place, and confidence was restored.

I never knew but of one candidate who managed to take Dr. Lee in, and it happened thus: A public school and university man, who had spent a good deal more time in athletics than in theology, went in for his *vivâ voce*. His chances of passing were of the slenderest, and there sat the Bishop with his watch on the table, for he had to time minute each interview. The candidate had read, but not construed, the passage. As he glanced across the table, he saw one of Westcott's and Lightfoot's books close to his lordship's elbow. A happy thought struck him, so he inquired with becoming modesty which of the two was the greater authority? The Bishop grew suddenly animated, his eyes sparkled, and he poured out a torrent of appreciatory criticism. The youth, as in duty bound, listened with affected humility. Lee glanced at his watch; the time was up; no question was asked, and the candidate was ordained. Great men have their weaknesses, and Lee's was—he loved to hear his own voice. Few men spoke so wisely or so well.

He had occasionally a droll way of putting things. Some of our advanced readers—I do not mean advanced in theology but in years—may remember some ritualistic rows which took place in connection with my old church at St. Stephen's, Salford, a

quarter of a century or more ago. It was a very small storm in a very small pond, and one wonders how sensible people could have run amuck against things now practised everywhere without offence. I suppose I must have been in advance of my day. The bishop must have thought so too, for, in the only interview I ever had with him on the subject, he said, 'Mr. Huntington, you have composed for your people a tremendous potion, and made them drink it off without giving them time to draw their breaths.' But he could be angry. I never saw him more put out than by the way his health was proposed, and thanks accorded to him, at the visitation dinner for his primary charge—he never delivered but one other. By unlucky chance this duty fell on my old acquaintance, the Rev. Hart Ethelston, who pronounced it to be 'the most *innocuous* charge he had ever heard.' That was damning with faint praise with a vengeance, and the Bishop never forgot it.

But I must hasten on. My readers will thank me, I think, for Dr., now Bishop, Westcott's narrative of his last visit to Mauldeth.

'The health of the Bishop was already shaken, but his intellectual powers were never greater. In his intervals of leisure he returned to each old topic of interest. Now it was the famous variation in Luke ii. 14; now the almost prophetic character of

Æschylus, on whom I happened to be busy working at the time; now a volume of sketches of old masters, in which he showed me the outline of Thorwaldsen's famous "Night" (owl and all), already given in a drawing (unless I am mistaken) by one of the Caracci; now it was the work of Arnold, on whom he delighted to dwell with loving admiration; now some aspect of diocesan labour in which he saw some bright promise of hope. One evening I can never forget. We had dined alone; there had been the usual rich variety of subjects in his conversation—playful quotations from Thucydides, and Aristophanes, and Virgil, in memory of school-days; a clear summary of the latest results of the explorations of Palestine; an estimate of the moral influence of Shakespeare, which, to my surprise, he judged somewhat unfavourably. As the evening closed in, the topics became graver—he spoke of some of the difficulties of belief, of future punishment, and, in illustration of the instinctive promptings of the heart, he quoted the lines which he always called some of the noblest ever written: "*virtutem videant, intabescantque relictâ*;" of modern theories—and here alone he allowed himself to use stern severity in condemning some untrained and hasty speculations. Then came a long and solemn pause, while his thoughts, I fancy, no less than mine, were pondering on the relation of Biblical controversies to the fulness of Christian

faith. At last the Bishop turned his eyes on me—they were overflowing with tears—with a look which clings to me now, and said only this, “Ah, Westcott, μὴ Φόβου μόνον πίστευε.” The words have risen again and again before me in times of anxiety and doubt, charged for ever with a new force; and what would I not give if I could convey to others the impression which they conveyed to me—crowning with the grace of complete self-surrender and childlike faith the character which through long years I had learned to revere for love, for power, for breadth, for insight, for justice, for sympathy.’

I am grateful to Bishop Westcott for these remarks, and I have read them over and over again, for my own impression would have been that Bishop Lee felt more than most men the intellectual difficulties of belief.

I was present the last time he attended his cathedral. The changes in him were very apparent, and we could see in him more than the beginning of the end. His sight was failing, and as he was walking down the chapter-house steps, he could not see where next to place his foot. I went out of my rank in the procession and offered him my arm, and so we walked into the choir together. I shall never forget his grasp, nor the warmth of his thanks.

The Bishop died at his official residence at

Mauldeth Hall, after a painful illness borne with exemplary patience. He did not live to be old, but long enough to deplore the loss of friends all the more severely, because, considering what he was and what he might have been, he made comparatively so few. 'I am suffering,' he said a short time before his death, 'the Roman's curse, "*Si quis hos cineres violabit, ultimus suorum moriatur.*"'

His last words were characteristic: 'Occleston [his physician] tells me I am in danger, but I can trust. God's love has been greater to me than mine to Him, first at Rugby, then at Birmingham, and then in the grand work here.' No monument marks him in his cathedral, which was hardly to be expected considering all the circumstances, much as one could wish to see his effigy idealised so as to transmit to posterity some sense of his striking face and figure. But a church, stately but simple, near to where he lived, has been erected to his memory; and in addition to his munificence to public institutions, he bequeathed his magnificent library to Owens College, now the Victoria University. The college was then little more than in its infancy, and one can only imagine the boundless influence such a man would have exercised for its welfare, had his life been spared, or had it been founded earlier.

His truest memorial, however, survives in the hearts of those whom he made what they were, and

in the undying service done for the Church and for Christianity by the profound and illustrious scholars whom I have already named, one of whom, alas! Bishop Lightfoot, has since followed him. In this sense he might well say, '*exegi monumentum ære perennius.*' —

I have called what I have written 'Random Recollections,' and random they are, for I have drawn on the memories of others besides my own: on those of men immeasurably better able to judge of him than I can possibly be; men whose intimacy with him was infinitely greater than mine, and whose knowledge and scholarship and learning made them eminently fitted to estimate him.

I do not think that Manchester appreciated him as it ought. Partly from circumstances, partly from faults which lay on the surface, they saw his defects, and did not rightly estimate his real worth. I am pleased to be able to state that this was the verdict passed on my paper in *Temple Bar*, from which the editor has kindly allowed me to make some extracts, by the bishop's son-in-law, the Rev. Canon Evans: 'You were one of the few who were able to discern his (the Bishop's) more noble qualities.'

I am thankful that I was able to do so. Manchester is not the only place which has not rightly estimated its greatest men. The century is richer by such men as James Prince Lee, and all the poorer when they are taken away.

## II.

# A Large-hearted Prelate:

JAMES FRASER, D.D.,

SECOND BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.

BISHOP FRASER was consecrated on Lady Day, 1870, and I preached my first sermon as rector of Tenby on the Feast of the Epiphany, 1867. So that I can only lay claim to a very limited acquaintance with him. But during my annual visits to Manchester, I saw something and heard much about him, to say nothing of the newspapers, which were often full of him, his doings, and his sayings.

When I first saw him, he was in the full vigour of his magnificent constitution, and a very man among men. As I looked at his clear, healthy complexion, invigorated by his rapid walks from Bishop's Court, the contrast between him and his predecessor, who had been slowly succumbing, in spite of his almost insurmountable will, to sickness and infirmity, was almost too painful.

When it was bruited that the See had been offered

to a Mr. Fraser, every one was asking, Who is Mr. Fraser? and the reply was, A country parson from Berkshire. Then those who were curious in such matters consulted their 'Crockford' and the 'Oxford University Calendar,' and it turned out that he had taken a first class, and had been a fellow of Oriel. And gradually it oozed out that he was no ordinary man, and that, so far from vegetating in the country, he had been laying up stores of usefulness; and that he had been employed by the Government of the day in collecting statistics on the state of education in America.

The wisdom of Mr. Gladstone's choice soon became manifest. Men of all schools congratulated both the Premier and his nominee—men of such varied opinions as Dean Church, Dr. Liddon, Bishop Temple, and Dean Stanley. And they all seemed to hit on the very qualifications which Lancashire was sure to estimate. He was a man of affairs rather than of books; a philosopher of the forum rather than of the cave. It was presently seen, too, that he was very approachable—nay, that if you did not approach him, he would approach you.

Few men possessed such a winning presence. He was just the man a nervous lady would delight to travel alone with on a railway journey, or into whose hand a timid child would place its little fingers to be led over a crossing; and, may I add, to whom a burdened heart would tell its tale of sorrow or of sin.



‘Nature had bestowed upon him a fine physical constitution. His frame was tall, broad, erect, well-built, and muscular; his chest was ample and deep; his forehead massive and open; his chin large and firm; his eyes clear, shining, and wide apart; his nose prominent and strong; his lips distinct and thin; his countenance in action bright and sympathetic, but in repose pensive almost to sadness; his voice a sweet, penetrating tenor, capable of almost every variety of expression, from the joy of laughter to the sorrow of tears; while by the shake of his hand, he would convey an electric current of friendliness and goodwill. There was something in his very tread which attracted attention; his step was elastic and long—the step of health, of purpose, and of power. . . . Men looked at him as if they were saying to themselves, “There goes one who is perfectly sincere, one whose business it is to make others happy, whose vocation it is to spread joy.”’<sup>1</sup>

This is no exaggeration. Soon after his consecration, he was entertained by an intimate friend of mine, then Mayor of Salford, together with a Romish ecclesiastic of equal rank. My friend’s little daughter (she had not then ‘come out’) sat watching the two bishops, and, girl-like, taking in all they said. I asked her what she thought of each? ‘The Romish bishop,’ said she, ‘seemed to be thinking of the effect of what

<sup>1</sup> *Bishop Fraser’s Lancashire Life.* By the Rev. J. W. Diggle.

he was going to say before he opened his lips. Our dear Bishop seemed to be speaking everything straight from his heart.'

My young friend, if she sees these lines, will remember the conversation. She was an observant little philosopher in petticoats.

My first introduction to Bishop Fraser took place in the vestry of a church in Hulme, built by the noble firm of Birley. It was what Manchester folk call a 'sloppy' night following on a foggy day, the rain fell drip-dripping from the roofs of the houses, and the streets were muddy, or, as they say in the north, 'clarty.' Yet the Bishop arrived in due time, bag in hand, unattended either by chaplain or flunkey. The church was crammed, mostly by mill-hands, and there was a pervading odour of damp fustian, cotton fluff, and machinery oil, showing that the people had come straight from the works and in their every-day dress, with the exception of the mill-girls, who were smartened up to the nines. We walked in procession, 'in snow-white stoles in order due,' preceded by a cross or banner bearer, and singing 'Brightly gleams our banner,' and 'Onward, Christian soldiers,' in which the Bishop's clear voice could be distinctly heard. The address—it could hardly be called a sermon—was earnest, pointed, and suitable to place and people. He spoke of home life and its blessings. He reprobated young people, and especially young girls, leaving the parental roof for

the greater liberty of lodgings. He pointed out the difference between liberty and licence; that submission to parents and those whom Providence has placed over us is the truest independence; and then he entered so minutely into the trials incidental to mill-life, that I could not help thinking of what was said of another great preacher, that he knew the tricks of trade so well that he might himself have served an apprenticeship to each craft represented in the congregation.<sup>1</sup> He then turned to the young people, who were mostly sitting together, and besought them not to rise in the morning or to retire to rest at night without prayer for forgiveness, for guidance, for protection. I watched his face whilst he was preaching, and I was struck by its pathos. It looked as if he was in a sense bearing the burden of sin and misery around him, and that he might have said with St. Paul,<sup>2</sup> 'Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all; and in the same manner (R.V.) do ye also joy and rejoice with me.'

When service was over, and we had gone back to the vestry, he laid his hand on the incumbent's shoulder, and, if I remember right, on mine too, and he said, 'Do not go into extremes, do not go into extremes.' Perhaps he thought we both needed the hint; perhaps we did. I thought to myself, as he

<sup>1</sup> Dr. M'Neill of Liverpool, if I remember right.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. ii. 17.

shook hands with us at parting, '*O si sic omnes.*' But why do bishops come and go like—well, let us say judges of assize, and never say a word of encouragement to the clergy and church-workers? Their visits may be 'few, and far between,' but they are not much 'like angel's visits.' Bishop Wilberforce could win all hearts, but all bishops are not Wilberforces or Frasers. Some feel more than they are able to express. I was one day looking at some recent photographs in a shop not a hundred miles from Manchester, and took up one of a prelate whose name I will leave my readers to surmise. 'A grand man, sir, a grand man,' was the bookseller's comment; 'but not much bothered with sentiment.' I named the circumstance to a noted dignitary. He said, 'Perhaps you do the Bishop injustice; he *feels* a good deal more than he *cares to show.*'

The church was one of those built by the Messrs. Birley, of whom I may freely speak, because they are gathered to their rest. Some time after, when I was bringing out the second edition of my *Church's Work in our Large Towns*, I sent Bishop Fraser the 'proofs' of my account of Manchester. In speaking of the Birleys, I had written 'a firm of princely merchants,' but one of the brothers to whom I sent a revise struck out the word 'princely.' But the Bishop penned in the margin '*stet*,' so there it remains.

As I was going home through the then narrow and

crowded Deansgate, I noticed a barefooted, slipshod little girl tripping along before me, and singing, as she ran, in a sweet Lancashire voice—

‘Angels of Jesus, angels of light,  
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night.’

I tried to keep up with her, but she dived down a dark alley and was ‘lost to sight,’ but not ‘to memory dear,’ and I have never forgotten the circumstance. Poor little ‘pilgrim of the night’! how the simple incident would have touched the Bishop!

Some years after I was walking from Manchester to Eccles rather late on a winter’s night, and I overtook a detachment (I do not know if that is the proper word) of policemen returning from their duty. So I joined them, and somehow the conversation turned on the Bishop. I found that he knew each one of them, had asked after their wives and families, talked to them, drawn out their sympathies, and—oh, ye lordly prelates, think of it!—*shaken hands with them*. As I parted with them, the superintendent said to me, ‘I wish that more of you clergymen would think that we constables have souls. You would not lose by it, I can tell you, Good-night, sir, good-night! We must part here.’ A friend of mine had a large Bible class of policemen in London. When he left his curacy to live on his college fellowship, they presented him with a handsomely-bound and clasped quarto Bible, with a reading-table to set it on.

But this was just Bishop Fraser's forte. I believe I was the first clergyman of my time, in Manchester, who undertook to hold preachments in warehouses and railway sheds, and in the open air. Certainly I was the first of the cathedral clergy to do so. These services were started by a layman,—to whom, in consequence, we gave the name of Bishop,—but they were developed by others. My lay friend wrote to me to Tenby, to say that the Dean (Dr. Cowie) had taken one of these services, and later on, to his delight and satisfaction, the Bishop. My audiences had been pretty promiscuous—railway and pit-brow and foundry men, and brickmakers, and mill-hands; but there were no fish that did not come to the Bishop's net, and his ready voice was heard not only by operatives, but by medical students, employées at theatres, cab-drivers, and even scavengers and slaughter men. But he made mistakes, as who has not done? He was not, and did not pretend to be, a theologian, and some people said that in his numerous unpremeditated utterances he sometimes went very near heresy. But, in spite of this, his heart and conscience were sound, even though it might be true, as Dr. Macfadyen alleged, and as many other people regretted, that his sermons 'dealt so little with the doctrines and experimental sides of Christianity.'<sup>1</sup> There cannot be a doubt that old-

<sup>1</sup> *Diggles's Life*, p. 293.

fashioned church-going folk got tired of social questions, and wanted to hear a little more of what they considered 'the Gospel.' A lady friend of his once spoke of him as 'a magnificent pagan.' But a pagan in her sense he never was.

Some persons looked on him as a socialist. A Christian socialist I do not hesitate to call him.

What could be nobler than the following utterances on politics?<sup>1</sup> 'I will tell you what politics mean. They do not mean being a Conservative or a Radical, belonging to a Liberal or a Tory club; but they mean seeking the best interests of the nation, the greatest happiness of the greatest number, by every legitimate means. That was what political science meant when Plato and Aristotle taught it. And Christianity teaches such things as these: it teaches public spirit, patriotism, and obedience to the law. Above all things, it teaches men to be fair to their opponents, and to discountenance all mean and pitiful ambitions. What does it matter who is Prime Minister of England, so long as whoever fills that high position is seeking the best interests of the people? I am neither a Conservative nor a Liberal. I hardly ever gave a vote at an election in my life, but I do desire that the country shall be governed by men, come from what side of the House they may, who are trying to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number. . . . Christianity, if more widely diffused, would

purge our political atmosphere, as it has purged our moral and social atmosphere.’<sup>1</sup>

Well does Mr. Diggle say, ‘Bishop Fraser was no cheap and noisy demagogue. The notion of setting class against class was utterly alien from his temper, which was above all things a temper of inclusive charity. But, to all classes alike, he spoke with transparent directness and plainness of speech, telling the rich of the utter selfishness of many of their luxuries; telling the poor of the utter selfishness of many of their complainings.’<sup>2</sup>

Here is the way he talked to the railway employées at Peterborough, June 23, 1873: ‘Oh, my friends, a working man wrote to me, and said, if he wanted a thimbleful of drink, it is beer he gets; but if a capitalist wants his drink, he has champagne; and that because a man can put champagne on the table, he must be happier than you, who can only afford to drink beer; and because he has ten thousand a year, he must be happier than you, who have only five-and-forty shillings a week. There is a saying that everyone has a skeleton in the house somewhere; and these skeletons are more likely to be in rich men’s houses than in poor men’s houses, because there are more places to put them in. A rich man cannot always

<sup>1</sup> Address to the employées of the London and North-Western Railway, April 25, 1871.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, pp. 342, 343.



make all things pleasant between himself and his wife, make his children obedient, keep away gout, cholera, or typhoid fever. The rich man may have been speculating in some foolish investment, have many sleepless nights, and wake one morning to find himself a ruined man. Do not allow your minds to run in this course. Friends, rise to a different conception of happiness than the distinction between beer and champagne, and ten thousand a year and forty-five shillings a week. Why, if a man has a house in which he feels as safe as if it were his castle, if he has employment which he is equal to, and brings him in fair wages; if he is wise in choosing as his wife a thrifty, clean, kind-hearted woman, and God has blessed him with little children, to prattle and tell him how they got patted on the head for good conduct at school, and gained a little prize for what they have done; then, if he has not the elements of true happiness within his reach, he is the most discontented man I ever met. Riches don't make happiness. It is the contented heart that gives the truest zest to life. . . . Mr. Ruskin, if he could have his way, would have us all located in some secluded spot, far away from the whistle of the locomotive, and the thud of the steam-hammer. There might be happiness, order, and prosperity in such a state of things; but not such happiness, order, plenty, and prosperity as we in this generation have been

accustomed to. I admit that a tall chimney vomiting out thick volumes of smoke is not a great element in the picturesqueness of a prospect ; but when I associate with a tall chimney four hundred working men, earning honest wages, and living independently on a fair competence, enjoying the protection of the law, and able to give their children a good education if so disposed—I can see a bright side even to that gloomy picture ; and, although I like the country as much as any man can do, I am not altogether dissatisfied at being thrown by God's providence in perhaps one of the dirtiest and smokiest towns in England.' Then he goes on : ' Oh, my men, if you are married men, if you have children, do remember the duties you owe to that wife, do remember the duties you owe to those children. Never let a child of yours see father come home drunk, never let a child of yours hear father swear, never let a child of yours see you strike your wife, or hear a word of unkindness pass between you and her. Surely you can govern your temper sufficiently for that. As to temptations for drinking, most of you—unless you have given way to them for so long that they have become a kind of second nature—surely in the powers of Christianity, if you ask and trust more to prayer than to any pledge taken at a temperance meeting, can overcome that devil of drunkenness—though perhaps he is the hardest of all devils to overcome. I live among

working men ; have always lived among working men. In the first twenty years of my ministry I lived among a population of agricultural labourers, now I live among artisans, and I am thankful to say I have always been brought into friendly and kindly relations with them both. I think I know, and I certainly can sympathise with, their trials, difficulties, and hardships ; and I never feel myself more distinctly doing my duty as a Christian bishop than when I am trying to help them. But the thing above all I desire to see, and that every man must desire to see who has the wellbeing of England at heart, is that the working classes in this country should understand their own true interests; and that, understanding them, they shall adopt the best and wisest means of securing them for themselves and their children.'

His habit of walking in and out of town, sometimes after attending late meetings, led to that knowledge of all classes which helped him so much in his intercourse with them. They met him—overtake him they could not—striding rapidly along at a pace that fairly took away other people's breath, but not his. And on he posted, exchanging kindly greetings with every one. With Walter Scott, he held that there was no one from whom you could not learn something, and, it must be added, to whom you could not impart something.

Here is a case in point, which, although I have told

the story elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> I hope I may be allowed to repeat here.

He was on his way to preach in the neighbourhood of Bolton-le-Moors, a wild moorland tenanted by mill-hands and colliers. So, as the Bishop strode along, he came to some by-roads, and lost his way. Overtaking a collier returning from the pit, black and grimy, with his Davy-lamp in his hand, he accosted him. 'Can you tell me the way to Bolton, my man?' 'Oy, mester,' not looking up; 'aw'm boond part o' th' way mysen, and if thee doan't moind walking on wi' me, aw'll show thee a gainer cut.' Then he surveyed the Bishop from head to foot, shovel-hat and gaiters, took his pipe out of his mouth (a sure sign of Lancashire politeness), and said, 'Hand o'er thy bag, mester; aw'll carry it for thee.' The Bishop handed it over, when this conversation ensued:—

Collier: 'I reckon fra yore cut, mester, yo're summat high up i' th' Choch. Whaw may ye be, if aw may mak so bold as to ax?'

Bishop (smiling): 'Why, yes, I am, as you say, somewhat high up in the Church.'

Collier: 'Whaw may ta be? Whaw art ta, na?'

Bishop: 'Well, I'm the Bishop.'

Collier: 'Thou art th' Lord Bishop, and walkin' alongside o' a common chap like me?'

<sup>1</sup> *Temple Bar Magazine*: 'Two Bishops of Manchester.'

Bishop : 'And why shouldn't I?'

Collier : 'Aw sees no reas'n, but aw reckon there isn't a deal o' Lord Bishops as would ; but mebbe, if thou'rt Lord Bishop, thou canst tell me th' road to heav'n?'

Bishop : 'I hope I can.'

Collier : 'Aw'm none so sure. Aw rayther mis-doubt thee. Thou wouldst none be axing me th' road to Bolton if thou know'd th' road to heaven.'

Bishop : 'Why, you talk as if heaven were a long way off. Heaven, my friend, is within you. You and I are making our heaven if we are striving to fear and love and serve God, and to hate what is sinful. Did you never feel happier because your conscience was at peace, because you had spent a good day?'

Collier : 'None so oft as I ought. But thou must be a very happy mon if a' aw hear o' thee be true.'

Bishop : 'Don't believe all you hear ; we none of us are so good as we ought to be.'

So the Bishop and his companion walked on together till they came to a turn in the road, when the collier handed back the bag, and the two parted ; but not till he had asked, 'Where art ta going to preach, my lord? Aw reckon I mun ca thee my lord.' The Bishop told him. So the collier went home and tidied himself up, and not only came to church himself, but brought a good many of his

chums with him. The Bishop took the conversation for the subject of his sermon, and preached a most telling one.

To a south countryman as he was, some of his Lancashire experiences were new.

Soon after he came into the diocese, he went to consecrate a church built at the sole expense of one person, costing £20,000.

‘I got out at B—— station,’ he writes, ‘and after a sharp walk of twenty minutes, came in sight of the church at the distance of about a mile. I was struck even then with its nobility. “Can you tell me where Mr. W—— lives?” I inquired of a pedestrian;—“the gentleman who has built this noble church.” “Oh, ay, it’s yon cottage against yon bank.” Thinking there was some mistake, I went on, and presently overtook a girl in Sunday attire. “Can you tell me where Mr. W—— lives, who built this noble church?” “That’s it,” she replied, pointing to the same unpretentious cottage. “I’m going to th’ consecration.” Still I considered there was an error somewhere, but made my way to the door. An old woman, simply but respectably dressed, answered my knock. I dared not ask if Mr. W—— was in. I repeated my question, “Can you tell me where Mr. W—— lives, who built this noble church?” “Oh, you’re the Bishop, are you? He’s been expecting on you. Come forrard, you’ll find him i’ th’ kitchen.” Ushered into the

kitchen, I found an old but fine-looking man sitting by the fire, smoking a churchwarden pipe. "So you've come, have you?" said the smoker. "Nowt like being in good time. There'll be a snack of something when you've done." "You have done nobly by the district, Mr. W——," I said, seizing his hand, and giving it a hearty grasp. He gave me an equally hearty squeeze, but seemed surprised. "Naw, naw," he said, "I made the population with my mills, so I mun do my duty by 'em.'" <sup>1</sup>

Instances of plain living combined with plainness of speech are not rare among north-country folk. During my first curacy I went with my then incumbent to call upon an old gentleman, well known as 'the Oldfield Lane Doctor,' to ask for a subscription to our schools. We were shown into the kitchen, where we found him sitting down to his tea. Before the fire, in a Dutch oven, were two or three red herrings, of which, with the tea, he asked us to partake. As we sipped our Bohea, he put several questions to us about the schools, the number of children in attendance, etc. And then he got up and said perhaps he might afford us a trifle. I wondered if it would be ten shillings or a sovereign. He opened an old-fashioned oak desk with brass handles, and I saw him turning over some papers, and every now and then moistening his forefinger.

<sup>1</sup> *life*, p. 19.

Then he wrapped them in a brown paper parcel, which he tied up with a piece of string, and, putting it into Mr. Booth's hand, said, 'Count them over when you get home ; I want no receipt.' Could we believe our eyes? There were twenty-five pound notes, and very dirty ones. He once gave a parson of my acquaintance who had been to consult him—of course, free of charge—a hare. The parson was a bachelor and somewhat of a clerical dandy, being specially particular about the fit of his gloves. So the old doctor watched him out of his surgery door, to see if he carried the hare himself. Fortunately the pastor spied his benefactor looking out, and, knowing his humour, he took the prize safely home. It was well he did, for the next time he paid him a visit he noted the circumstance, and testified his approval by a further gift of a brace of pheasants—of course, to be carried home.

What a charmingly characteristic story is that told of Fraser's helping a poor girl home with her box ! One night he returned to the Victoria Station by the last train, and found a poor girl sitting on her box not knowing what to do, as no porter was to be seen, and no cab to be had. The Bishop's man was waiting for him ; so between the two they took the young woman's box and carried it to its destination in some obscure street in Salford. Somehow or other, what had happened spread abroad ; within a short time



the Bishop came to preach in a neighbouring church,<sup>1</sup> when standing room could hardly be found ; and not only that, but his name came to be revered in that district of working men and women.

It was quite of a piece with the impression he made at his consecration, when, after a long and impressive service, as he was walking away, a working man passed him, and, touching his cap, said, 'God bless you, my lord.' When the Bishop related the incident, he confessed that, impressed as he was with the service, these simple words touched him more than all the rest.

It is almost impossible to avoid all reference to the Miles Platting affair, almost the only disquieting circumstance of his episcopate ; but I will only say that, after reading Mr. Diggle's impartial account, the sole conclusion one could come to is that both parties were equally sincere and equally irreconcilable. For how could you hope to reconcile the 'Church Association,' which seemed to some to make the judgments of a parliamentary elected court override both the law and the gospel, with the 'English Church Union,' which renounced Lord Penzance and all his works ? It is well to bury such miserable strifes in a deserved oblivion. They could not occur again.

The most vigorous constitution must inevitably give way to the stress placed upon mind and body

<sup>1</sup> My old church of St. Stephen, Salford.

by such work as that of Bishop Fraser. For some time he had, as is well known, contemplated his retirement. But it was not to be. He was destined to die in harness, and as much in the midst of his duties as was the case with his illustrious predecessor. A short illness, unsuspected fatal symptoms, and the end came. It does not become me to uplift the veil and to speak of circumstances of which I could have no personal knowledge, and which have been well depicted by sympathising friends.

His Master's call  
Found him prepared, full-panoplied for heaven,  
A good and faithful servant who had won  
The benisons of all, whate'er their name  
Or creed: giving his time, his health, his powers,  
To raise the fallen, rescue the down-trodden,  
And bind them in one bond of brotherhood,  
Setting upon their brows the seal of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Nor need I recall the last rites of all, how his beloved remains passed through the crowded streets of Manchester without any earthly pomp or show, but witnessed by multitudes of men with uncovered heads, and of women whose voices of mourning could be clearly heard, and how at length, 'on Tuesday morning, October 27, 1885, just as the sun was shedding its glow of tender light upon the autumn foliage, the body reached its final resting-place at Upton Nervet, his happy home for ten rejoicing years

<sup>1</sup> Verses by John Diggle.

—his body's restful home till time shall be no more.'<sup>1</sup>

One recollection of the Old Church I may, however, bring back. I stood myself a year or two after his death in the south-east aisle of the cathedral, where the Fraser Chapel has been placed. It was Whitsuntide—Whit-week, as the Lancashire people call it. Crowds had come into Manchester by train, and as I watched there, streams of men and women and children passed along till they stood before the recumbent effigy of the beloved Bishop. There was no disorder, no confusion, no audible sounds, but a polite request to be permitted to get a little nearer, a word or two from fathers and mothers as they lifted up their little children to have a better sight, 'See thee, see thee, there he lies,' and all broken by unrestrained sobs. It recalls what one sees abroad at the shrines of saints.

Well! we call this the prosaic nineteenth century, but I venture to think there is a good deal of poetry in it—the poetry of love, the poetry of devotion, the poetry of reverence, the poetry of religion, the poetry of tender 'recollections,' even if at best they may prove to be somewhat 'random.'

<sup>1</sup> Diggle, p. 533.

### III.

## A Model Bishop:

SAMUEL WILBERFORCE, D.D.,

BISHOP OF OXFORD AND WINCHESTER.

THE first time I ever saw Bishop Wilberforce was more years ago than I care to remember. It was in my native town of Hull, and at a meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. I think, but am not sure, that it was the first meeting that Society had held there, for the Church Missionary Society had had it all its own way. And, to tell the truth, there was no lack of zeal, for its missionaries had come, at its anniversaries, from all quarters of the globe. But there were reasons why the meeting I am speaking of should specially interest a Hull audience, because, in addition to the charm of novelty, it had been widely circulated that two brothers, bearing the honoured name of Wilberforce, would be there. So it was no wonder that the room was crowded, and the assembly appreciative.

The story goes, that when the brothers met—one

as Archdeacon of Surrey, the other as Archdeacon of the East Riding, and for the first time—they greeted each other with outstretched hands, and exclaimed ‘*Arcades ambo !*’ But of the truth of this story I know nothing ; it may have taken place in the anteroom, it did not take place on the platform : that I can testify. A well-known layman was in the chair, an old and accredited friend of William Wilberforce’s, and he introduced the speakers, with some graceful references to their illustrious father, and the great name his sons had inherited. Many years later I heard Bishop Wilberforce speak of the perilous inheritance of the name of Wilberforce.

It was a perilous inheritance in the East Riding, where Robert Isaac Wilberforce had made the name loved and honoured. And never was there a greater shock than when he went over to Rome, and no one felt it more keenly than the Archbishop of the province (Vernon Harcourt). Archdeacon Robert Wilberforce’s piety, learning, simplicity of character, and gentleness of demeanour, had made every one who knew him love him. In this sense he was almost as much gifted as his brother. I can hardly recall more than a general impression of the future Bishop as he then looked, but I think that Richmond’s portrait, although a little flattering, and making him look too young when actually taken, gives a good idea of him as I seem to recollect him.

The two looked very youthful in aprons and gaiters, and an old-fashioned Methodist who was sitting by me could not make out why they were so dressed, and addressed as 'Venerable,' until I explained that the breeches, etc., were the official costume, and Venerable the official designation, of all archdeacons. I daresay the old Methodist was thinking of John Wesley, who was usually spoken of by his disciples as 'Our venerable founder.'

There was a good deal of difference between the speaking of the two. Comparatively early in his career as it was, Samuel Wilberforce was already showing indications of his future powerful and persuasive eloquence. Robert Wilberforce, although possessing the family gift of sweetness of voice and intonation, spoke hesitatingly, and as if he were weighing every word before giving it utterance. But his charges were full of learning, and his treatise on the Incarnation is recognised as a theological classic wherever the English language is spoken.

I did not get an actual introduction to Bishop Wilberforce till a good many years after, and, indeed, I may say that I introduced myself. That was in the year 1857, when he came to preach in Manchester Cathedral for his favourite Society — that for the Propagation of the Gospel. He happened to arrive before service-time, for the friend who drove him into town came early, so as to secure seats for himself

and his family in the fast-crowding church. I was alone in the chapter-house, and, as I said, introduced myself, on which we got talking about Yorkshire, and Hull and its associations. I told him that the old house in High Street, where his father had lived and his boyhood was spent, was still kept with reverent care, and that it was looked on with almost as much veneration by Americans as Shakespeare's house at Stratford-on-Avon. We then spoke of the Wilberforce Monument, the tall column which abuts on the dock walls, and is in close proximity to St. John's Church. Then—I was going to say—I had the 'impudence' to tell him a story which set him off laughing (*N.B.*—he had not put his robes on). The story was this. By an unlucky mischance the statue of the great Emancipator, on the top of the column, was so placed as to face some noted wine and spirit vaults, whilst its back was turned towards St. John's. Now, I will not pretend to say whether the spirit vaults or the column were *in situ* first, but there they were, and some sailors, seeing the fun of the thing, managed to scribble on the pedestal—

'So, Billy Wilberforce, thou'st left us in the lurch,  
Turn'd thy face to the ginshop, and thy back to the Church.'

The Bishop made me tell him the story over again,—it was, by the way, couched in even more Chaucerian English,—but such was his charming versatility, that a minute or two after, he was talking on the gravest

of subjects, and especially on the work of the Church in Manchester. He then quietly walked into the choir and peeped in, through the choir screen, at the assembling congregation in the hall, and then he said, 'Whom have I got to preach to?' When I told him, he had not lost a single detail, and he seemed to have a word in season for every class as well as for every person present. He asked me too to find a seat for his valet, or whatever he was called. 'He will not see such a congregation every day, and who knows what the effect on him may be,' he said. He certainly struck the right key for Manchester folk. What a stress he laid on the words 'this busy hive of industry,' as he called the place! and how he summed up an eloquent appeal with something like the following words—I quote from memory:—

'A great explorer<sup>1</sup> has told us that in some remote region of Central Africa, until lately deemed inaccessible to European civilisation, he, nevertheless, found tokens of Manchester skill, Manchester enterprise, and Manchester wealth. There,' he said, looking in the direction where the great cotton-spinners were sitting, —'*there* were your cottons, *there* were your other textile manufactures; but *where* was the planting of the Cross of our redemption? There the name of one of your great firms was known, but *there* the Name of Christ was unknown.' Then, in a voice not loud, but which

<sup>1</sup> Livingstone, I believe.



penetrated to every corner of the large church 'Shall this be any longer your reproach? Shall commerce assert its claims, and the claims of your brethren sitting in darkness and the shadow of death be unheard? Roll away this reproach, I pray you, and let it not be that the love of gain can effect what the love of a dying Saviour cannot effect.'

The vast assembly listened with breathless attention, and the collection was the largest ever known in the cathedral. It was on that occasion, too, that a well-known alderman rushed up the chapter-house steps as briskly as his somewhat portly frame would allow, and pressed into the Bishop's hand a cheque for a hundred pounds. 'My lord,' he said, 'your sermon has convinced me that I ought to do something for missions. It is never too late to mend, for I never gave a penny to them before.'

Later on, at the Manchester Church Congress, when the Committee were settling the question of entertainers and entertained, so popular was Bishop Wilberforce, that no less than thirty applications were made to be his host, and he might have thrown his handkerchief into any house in the place and been welcome. When Wilberforce was asked where he would like to go—'Send me,' he said, 'to the good man who gave me a hundred pounds for S. P. G.' On this, Dean Bowers observed, 'He can go farther and fare worse: his dinners cannot be beaten, and his

peaches cost him a guinea a-piece.' On the same occasion Dean Bowers perpetrated a pun. To Mr. John Baptist Jowle, a well-known musical enthusiast, was assigned as a guest the Rev. R. W. Chope, the noted author and editor of a good many hymns, carols, and hymn-tunes. 'Quite right,' quoth the Dean; 'very appropriate. Chops and jowls should always go together.'

But I am anticipating. I met him again at the Oxford Church Congress in the summer of 1862. I was the guest of Dr. Williams, Principal of Jesus College, on the introduction of my old friend Henry D. Nihill, then curate of St. Alban's, Strangeways. The good Principal, although a bachelor, was a splendid host, and had his drawing-room filled with guests, and I may just say, in passing, that he asked me to take in the lady next in position to the distinguished dame he was conducting to the dining-room, as a compliment to my Lambeth degree.

Oxford was looking at its best, the trees were in leafy bloom, and the towers and spires burst on us with their unique and unequalled beauty, as a party from Manchester, including Archdeacon Anson and Canon Robert Birley and myself, arrived together. The streets, unspoilt then by tramways, were filling with bishops and clerics resident and non-resident. The inaugurating meeting was held in the Sheldonian Theatre, which was crammed to its utmost capacity.

As the Bishop entered, accompanied by sundry dons and divines, the whole assembly rose ; but when he dropped into the Vice-Chancellor's chair, he was nearly buried in it, and he looked—dare I say it?—in figure not much unlike Mr. Punch, minus the hump. A lady by my side whispered in my ear, ‘*That* the Bishop of Oxford!’ ‘Hush,’ I said, ‘and wait.’ She did wait, and no sooner did the great orator open his mouth, than she, and all present, were absorbed in rapt attention, and one could not help being reminded of what Boswell said of William Wilberforce—‘I saw what seemed a mere shrimp mount upon the table, but as I listened, he grew and grew till the shrimp became a whale.’

As a chairman he was simply perfect ; he had a smile of greeting for every one, and a nod of encouragement to nervous or timid speakers. Watch in hand,—and I noticed it was a very unpretending silver one,—he pointed to the minute hand, as if to give warning beforehand of the tinkling of the inexorable bell ; then he held up his fingers to show the secretary, Archdeacon Emery, the number of cards sent up. And as time pressed, he stood up and said : ‘My lords, ladies, and gentlemen, I have now in my hands no less than twenty cards, sent up by speakers, full of matter, and if each one speaks for the time allotted by our rules, we shall certainly be kept beyond midnight. I am entirely in your hands, and I am

willing to sit here for as long as you please; but if you do not wish to wait so long, I will, with your permission, make my selections.' He did make his selection of three well-known representatives of different schools of thought, all admirably chosen. In fact, at Oxford, in his own University and in his own cathedral city, he was entirely in his element, and he presided with a tact, a good-humour, and a dignity rarely equalled, and never surpassed.

I met him again, later on in the summer, amid very different scenes. He had gone to Whitby to seek necessary rest and change, after a fatiguing attendance in the House of Lords, and almost immediately after his noted encounter with Lord Chancellor Westbury. Readers of Mrs. Gaskell's *Sylvia's Lovers* will recognise this still picturesque Yorkshire watering-place in her 'Monkwearmouth.'

The Bishop preached in the old Priory Church, very little changed from what it must have been in the time of that delightful story. The venerable building was crowded, and many persons had to stand during the sermon. It was, indeed, a masterpiece of impressive eloquence on the Disobedient Prophet (1 Kings xiii.). I do not think I ever heard the subject treated in quite the same way. The Disobedient Prophet was made to represent a zealous younger man falling under the dispiritualising influences of an older man, whom he had been taught to respect for his age and

position, and yet in whose advancing years there had been a gradual decay of earnestness. Many were moved to tears, and amongst them a dear brother of mine since gone to his rest.

The Bishop, I thought, looked a little careworn, but after a few days at the seaside he 'plucked up greatly,' as they say in Yorkshire. A party of clerics, of whom I was one, met him on the beach, and, of course, raised our hats to him. He politely saluted us in return, and on my asking him after his health, as the only one of the party who knew him personally, he replied with rather an amused smile, 'I never felt better in my life.' 'What could you expect,' said a lay friend and lawyer, 'but that he should feel at his best after demolishing a Lord Chancellor?' There was a subsequent reconciliation, but Wilberforce withdrew nothing.

I think I met him next at the Manchester Church Congress in 1863. What a contrast that memorable gathering presented to the one which happened in the same place a quarter of a century later! I am sure there was not less zeal, but infinitely less of the *odium theologicum*, in the later than in the earlier assemblage. Party speech ran higher, and local orators were much more to the fore. Bishop Lee was unwell, and clearly not in his element, and he presided with a grim severity that much eclipsed his great powers.

Every one, too, was backing his own man or his

own party, and the cheers and counter cheers, and expressions of approbation or the reverse, were as loud and demonstrative as those which may be heard in these degenerate days of the House of Commons. Ritualists, or 'Puseyites,' as they were then called, were roundly abused, and of course retorted. Hugh Stowell and George Anthony Denison, of all good men in the world, got into open antagonism, and the president did not possess temper and tact enough to hold the balance between the parties.

At the working men's meeting, Bishop Wilberforce was at his very best. The night was wet, the streets were sloppy, as Manchester streets always are in rain, and yet the Free Trade Hall was crammed. A good many of the people, no doubt, came to hear Canon Stowell, then at the height of his deserved popularity; but many more to hear Bishop Wilberforce, whose sermon in the cathedral had not been forgotten. The great Protestant champion was in the middle of a powerful harangue, and energetically denouncing popish practices real or imaginary, when Wilberforce glided in, wrapped up to the ears in a cloak saturated with wet, and tried to make his way unobserved to the platform. But no sooner was he recognised than the working men jumped on to their legs, and shouted, as only North Country men can shout, 'Bishop of Oxford! Bishop of Oxford!' at the same time cheering and waving their hats over their heads.

Then he sat down in a corner of the platform, and tried to keep out of sight, but the noise only became more clamorous, and the cry was at length taken up by the whole audience. The worst of it was, that poor Mr. Stowell thought that the ovation was for himself, and stood with his arms folded, smiling his acknowledgments, till the shouts soon became unmistakable. Then Bishop Lee rose to order, and requested a hearing for the speaker. Archdeacon Denison and others remonstrated; shouts of 'Time! time!' were heard from all quarters; cheers and counter cheers were given, intermingled with a few hisses, till at length a working man bawled out, 'We ha' no' come to hear thee, Stowell; we can hearken to thee any day, man; we've come to hearken to Bishop o' Oxford.' Bishop Lee remonstrated a second time, and continued standing; but Wilberforce kept his seat, till, the noise becoming deafening, he rose and begged them to listen to the then speaker. But no! Wilberforce they would hear, and no one else. So at last the Bishop of Oxford stood up and made a speech in his very best vein, showing how thoroughly he knew and understood the working classes. When the three times three—the whole assembly continuing standing—were over, he sat down and seemingly went to sleep. But it must have been a cat's sleep, for when Mr. Hugh Birley, the then local member of Parliament, rose at the request of those present to ask his lordship to

sum up the speeches and discussion, he did it in such a masterly way as showed that he had not lost a word nor left a point untouched. *Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit.*

His reception at the Church Congress at Leeds was equally remarkable. What a push, to be sure, there was to get into the room. Archdeacons and dignitaries in aprons and gaiters, with their women-kind on their arms, were literally fighting for admission. A policeman said in my hearing, 'Why, it beats Theayter Royal.' Party spirit was running as high as it did at Manchester, and we all felt it a point of honour to cheer our own men, but everybody cheered Wilberforce. An old-fashioned country parson sat next me, and we were both armed with ponderous umbrellas, with which we thumped and thumped the floor till they were smashed. Then the parson, who had resisted the enthusiasm for the Bishop as long as he could, or as consistency demanded, or his prejudices permitted, was carried away by the general feeling, and he and I rose simultaneously, cheered till we were hoarse and clapped our hands till they were red and blistered. Then we shook hands and walked home together through the pouring rain, our umbrellas too far gone to be of any use.

At the Congress at Wolverhampton he was just as happy. How he spoke to the working classes of the



dignity of labour and the use of opportunity; and what a chord he touched, vibrating from heart to heart, when he said, 'Every man who understands what it is to labour, if it is only the putting of a pin's head on the top of a pin, if he does that work as to the Lord, is doing the very thing the angels are doing in heaven—he is doing the work God gave him to do.'

Every one knows that he was once hissed at a large meeting, and every one knows how quickly he changed the hisses into cheers. 'If,' he said, 'my friends in the body of the hall would take no more notice than I do of the *sibilant geese* who are giving vent to their natural utterances, we should be able to go on with the business of the meeting; but if those sibilant persons think that I am so young that their inoffensive noise can stand in the way of my speaking upon this resolution, I can tell them they have mistaken their man.' I was not present myself, but an eye-witness told me that his look of withering contempt, combined with the way he pronounced the words 'sibilant geese,' especially the *s*, was marvellous, and silenced the geese in a moment. A minute or two after he held the audience entranced.

Bishop Wilberforce has been accused of being all things to all men, but I am sure that it was in St Paul's sense, to win all to Christ. He was no party man; he used no shibboleth, although he has been accused of coquetting at various times with Evangeli-

cals and so-called Ritualists. But how could it be otherwise, with his antecedents, and with the bitter disappointment of the secession to Rome of some of his nearest and dearest relations. He was sometimes charged, too, with being a diplomatist of a Jesuitical turn of mind ; but I believe, with my old acquaintance Mr. A. J. Beresford Hope, that, in spite of appearances, he was one of the most transparent men that ever lived. Some people have compared him with Bishop Fraser, but the comparison is not a fair one. In some things they were very dissimilar, in others they possessed like idiosyncrasies. You could not be in the company of either without being irresistibly drawn. Both put you perfectly at your ease, both interested you by their conversation ; but Wilberforce's powers were infinitely more brilliant and more varied. Both gave you the impression of your being in the company of good men, but there was a spiritual fervour about Wilberforce which was hardly so conspicuous in Fraser. There was one point, however, in which the latter perhaps had the advantage, for the Bishop of Manchester never studied effect, whilst of his brother of Oxford and Winchester, in spite of his spontaneity,—to use the word for want of a better one,—this could hardly be said. Nevertheless, those who knew him best—and they always loved him best—felt that he was unconscious of this weakness, if such it could be called, and that his facile address and

complimentary utterances arose from his love of giving pleasure, and making people happy. Possibly in his, as in other cases, this was a dangerous gift.

I know of no one with whom, as an orator, Bishop Wilberforce could be compared, with the exception of the late Archbishop Magee, whom one felt to be an unconscious imitator of his. And in fact there never was a man who had more imitators, conscious or unconscious, but some only got hold of his more conspicuous mannerisms. I hardly see how it could be otherwise, for, after hearing him, his voice rang in your ears like notes of music; you pictured to yourself his ever-changing expression, you saw the impressive gesture of his hand, and what you heard fixed itself in your memory, and became part of your own thoughts. And if you possessed histrionic proclivities, as I unfortunately do, you could not help yourself—you imitated him without being aware of it. On the whole, I think that long-suffering congregations were benefited by these Wilberforcian imitations, if they were not too pronounced, for the higher your model the better for you, and the better by parity of reasoning, for your hearers. And, indeed, it was a high aim when younger men strove to take to their hearts the lessons they learnt from him. Who, indeed, could hear his ordination addresses, with that penetrating eye of his looking you into attention, without learning a higher, holier view of the obligations

of the sacred ministry,—addresses only equalled, if equalled, by those of the saintly Dupanloup? What Cuddesdon man has not *felt* what fell from the lips of the great Anglican Bishop, in the quiet of the college chapel, equal to anything ever said at Saint Sulpice. A curate of Tenby, a friend of Bishop King and Dr. Liddon, who left me to be Vice-Principal of Cuddesdon, could hardly speak of those addresses without an ever-recurring sense of the responsibility of having heard them. And how simple he could be ! as fitted to preach before the Queen and her court, as to talk to Hampshire and Sussex rustics. One can well believe the story of a clergyman asked to preach at Windsor or Osborne, I forget which, going to Wilberforce in some trepidation as to how he should acquit himself before royalty, and receiving for answer, ‘Don’t think of the Queen at all, my good fellow ; all the household will be there, butler, coachman, footman, cook, housemaid, even the scullery-maid. I should preach to *her*, if I were you.’

And that reminds me of the love that servants bore to him, and especially those who had been confirmed by him. A servant maid, who was an inmate of a house where I was a guest, was made joyous all the day on being told to prepare a room for the Bishop of Oxford. ‘The Bishop of Oxford, mem ?’ she said to her mistress ; ‘me to wait on that good gentleman ! Why, he confirmed me ;’ and in spite of regulations she

went dancing and singing along the corridor, without any rebuke, it need not be added, from her mistress. The Bishop had not forgotten her, and in thanking her for her services, said a few kind and encouraging words to her.

Like all men of his ardent and poetical temperament, the Bishop was a great admirer of nature. 'To him,' says his friend the Dean of York, 'the earth abounded with beauties. Every flower that bloomed, every grass and lichen, had an interest in his eyes. Each tree he understood in its peculiar growth and beauty. He knew the note and habits of every bird that flew. Nature teemed for him with objects of inexhaustive beauty and interest, which he never ceased to study, on which he was never tired of gazing.'<sup>1</sup>

He loved animals too; his horses and his dogs were his four-footed friends, and he regarded them in the same way as Walter Scott did, and as Bishop Thirlwall did, and I may almost say, as St. Francis of Assisi did.

Indeed, all who were brought into immediate contact with him loved him in return. They felt him to be a deeply devout and religious man,—a man whose life would brave looking into, and the more you looked into it, the more your heart drew to

<sup>1</sup> 'The Greatness of the Christian Man,' sermon by Arthur Purey-Cust, afterwards Dean of York.

him. A good deal has been said as to the wisdom or unwisdom of revealing so many private confidences in the life written by his son ; but I can only say for myself that I rose up from reading that book with a still higher estimate, if it were possible, of the good Bishop. The book is not a panegyric, as so many religious biographies are ; in telling the truth, whether for or against its subject, it more closely resembles the sacred narratives. It is something gained, I think, to see a great and good man stand before you in his weakness as well as in his strength ; and therefore you recognise a true portraiture. Perhaps it is in human nature to like to detect flaws in men one feels to be so immeasurably raised above one's puny self. It helps one not to despair of one's littleness to find such men not all perfection, and that their character may be in some respects as composite as the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

But who will not thank God for raising up such men as Bishop Wilberforce ? Who will not feel grateful that such powers as his were devoted to the highest and holiest causes ? Who will not feel happier that his various graces, natural or acquired, were consecrated to the Master's service ? And who, indeed, can read his journal, meant for no eye but his own, without being touched with the inner struggles of a holy man, humble in the consciousness of his own weakness, but with all the strength of divine grace to

be made perfect in them? A man *in* the world as few men were, yet in the best sense not of the world!

What men who even widely differed from him thought of him may be best seen from the words of the late Lord Cairns. Speaking in the House of Lords, he said, 'My lords, if every one of your lordships, who has been impressed by the lustre of the eloquence, the splendour of the talents, the unparalleled exertions and energy in the discharge of his great public functions displayed by the late right reverend prelate, was to rise in succession and bear his testimony to what he was, every one of those whom I have now the honour of addressing would rise in his turn and become a speaker.'<sup>1</sup>

And the Prince of Wales wrote to Mr. Reginald Wilberforce: 'His loss will be felt through the length and breadth of the land, as no one worked harder in his sacred calling than he did, and no one has left a higher name behind him than he has. I feel that I have lost a kind and valued friend, and can hardly realise the thought that we are to meet no more in this world.'

The newspapers were full of the terrible death of the Bishop of Winchester; but death could have no terrors to him; and Carlyle struck the truest note when he wrote, 'What a glad surprise!' No 'storied urn or animated bust' marks his resting-place in

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, vol. iii. p. 432; *Ibid.* p. 419; *Ibid.* p. 426.

Westminster Abbey, although the proposal was made to his family ; but, in accordance with his own long-expressed wishes, he was carried to his grave by his own people, and laid in his own church. I do not know what public monuments have been erected to his memory in his cathedral or elsewhere ; but surely none can be more touching or appropriate than the cross that marks the spot where he fell, with the simple initials, S. W., intersected with the episcopal crozier. A cross, too, is placed over his grave in Lavington Churchyard, and on it is engraved—

SAMUEL WILBERFORCE,  
BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.  
28 years a Bishop in the Church of God.  
Died July 19, 1872.  
Aged 67 years.

Was his death untimely? I think not. When one thinks, indeed, of the vigorous ages of men like the Bishop of Chichester and Mr. Gladstone, one feels that he might have looked for many more years of usefulness and activity ; but no one would have felt more keenly the gradual decay of his great powers, or the sadness of being laid aside by the infirmities of years, or the sorrow of surviving his contemporaries. *Sed Diis aliter visum.* And who would murmur? Not they who loved him best.



#### IV.

## A Profound and Humorous Prelate:

CONNOP THIRLWALL, D.D.,

BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S.

ANY one who travels northward from Carmarthen by the London and North-Western Railway, may have seen, about three miles out of the town, and on the right-hand side of the first station he stops at, a long, low-built house of no great pretensions, and with no great ecclesiastical character to speak of, save the somewhat imposing gateways adorned with mitres and the arms of the See. It is a large and fairly comfortable house, although a little cold and damp, standing as it does surrounded by shrubberies, and contiguous to the river Tivey, which sometimes takes the liberty of overflowing its banks.

This is Abergwili Palace, the official residence of the bishops of St. David's; more suitable, indeed, to modern requirements than to those of mediæval prelates who possessed archiepiscopal rank, and were

said to be barons at Llawhadden, monks at St. David's, deans at Brecon, and landed proprietors at Llamphey.

Here, indeed, for thirty-four years lived the noted Bishop whose name I have placed at the head of this memoir, and of whom I hope to give some random recollections drawn from my own memory, and from that of others who knew him more intimately than I can claim to do.

Here is Carlyle's account: 'Abergwili is a village of pitiful dimensions, all daubed, as usual, with white-wash and yellow ochre. It is built, however, like a common village, on both sides of the public road. At the farther end of it you come to solemn, large, closed gates of wood; on your shout they open, and you enter upon a considerable glebe-land pleasance, with the usual trees, turf-walks, peacocks, etc.; see at fifty yards' distance a long irregular, perhaps cross-shaped, edifice, the porch of it surmounted with a stone mitre. . . . We are in an excellent building; long galleries, spacious, quiet rooms, all softly carpeted, furnished room enough for the biggest duke. The mitre does not exclude soft carpeting, good *cheer*, or any contrivance for comforts to the outer man. . . . I have had to look into a thousand books. The good Bishop is as simple as a child.'

It would not have been Carlyle had he not found fault; so he grumbles hard at having to get up to the chapel services, a rule imposed on all guests, and,

indeed, at the mode of living in the palace generally. But it is but fair to say that he adds a sort of *per contra*, 'There is much good in all that I see. A *perfection of form* which is not without its value.'

Nevertheless, the author of *Cromwell* was sorely tried by having to sit in the same room with a portrait of Laud, once Bishop of St. David's. 'Do but think of a wretched scarecrow face of Laud looking down on us in Laud's own house that once was, as we sat at meat.'

Here is another account of Thirlwall from one much better qualified to judge: <sup>1</sup>—

'The memory of the simple, studious, earnest life at Abergwili is in itself a sermon full of impressive and noble teaching, of strong and gentle influences. The day began with the early service in the quiet chapel. The voice now silent, which made it solemn, and the grave earnestness with which he read the gospel of the day, were absolutely an exposition of its meaning, while the calm, thoughtful face and dignified bearing made part of the holy peace which seemed always to rest upon that time and place.

'When alone, he spent his day chiefly in "Chaos," as he playfully called the library in which he used to sit; and except when he entertained guests, or had business beyond Abergwili, he rarely went without its precincts. In summer-time, however, he was glad

<sup>1</sup> In the preface to *Letters of Bishop Thirlwall*, edited by Dean (now Bishop) Perowne and Rev. L. Stokes.

to quit "Chaos," and to sit and read under the trees, and to listen to the soft rustle of the wind passing through their leaves and branches.

'If he had friends with him, he made a point of driving to places of interest in the neighbourhood; and when there was time to spare in the morning, he would take them along the walks near the house, and show them his golden pheasants, peacocks, canaries, and other pets.

'In a small pond in the grounds, which had neither inlet nor outlet, three pikes were kept. One morning when the bishop went to see them, he found but two; not long after, on his next visit, one alone remained. He observed to a friend, it was impossible to take any interest in a creature who could devour his own family, and added, "I never looked at him again."

'After breakfast the bishop usually fed his geese, having abstracted whatever available pieces of bread lay within his reach for their benefit. In the depth of winter, when ice covered the ponds, and frost and snow were heavy on the ground, he never omitted his visits to them, for it was then, he said, they needed him most; and if remonstrated with for running these risks of catching cold, he would protest that it was to his geese he partly owed his health, because there were many days on which, but for them, he would not have ventured out of doors, and would have thus lost the air and exercise which contributed to it.'

A friend and eye-witness tells me he used to go down to the pond at four in the afternoon, when his correspondence was over, and call to his birds, 'Where are you all? where are you all?' and soon he was surrounded by his feathered friends running or flying over the meadow; and they would eat out of his hand, and put their beaks into his pockets to find out what was in them.

He had also a pet fox; but Master Reynard managed to hang himself with his own chain in an abortive attempt to get over the paling. 'His peacocks used also to be great favourites with him, but at last they grew so noisy that he could bear them no longer. Of one special pet he says, "What can possess my peacock? He is unfailing in his attendance under my window, and I think he never lets three minutes pass without delivering himself of a series of notes, which people who do not enjoy them call screams." So, before he left his palace at Abergwili, which he did on resigning his See, to the intense grief of his poorer neighbours, his geese were given away one Michaelmastide. The rarer tribes were, I believe, given to adorn some ponds, the peacocks were sent in pairs to loving friends. He had a great liking for his cats, and they for him. He shared his meals with them, gave them each a saucer of cream before he sat down to his own breakfast, and he allowed them to snatch bits of meat from his fork.

At a dinner-party at which some friends of my own were present, his favourite tabby had taken his place on his shoulder, according to custom when he was alone. Finding that pussy took up too much of his attention, he told the servant in attendance to remove him. But this was easier said than done. Puss was so unwilling to abdicate his exalted position, that, when the footman took hold of him, a struggle commenced, and the cat set his claws into the Bishop's neck, and so scratched him that he had to leave the table to put on a clean shirt and cravat.'

'Bishop Thirlwall,' says another of my lady friends, 'was staying as a guest at our house. Before breakfast the parlour-maid accosted me—

"Oh, miss, I cannot find the cat. I'm afraid she has been shut up all night in his lordship's room."

'Scarcely were the words spoken when the Bishop's door opened, and out stalked Grimalkin, rubbing her head at his lordship's gaiters.

"Oh, my lord, I'm afraid the cat has been shut up in your room."

"I beg you won't apologise for the cat ; she has been very good in keeping me company. She kept me from feeling lonely, didn't you, pussy?" (stroking the cat. "I beg you won't apologise for the cat.")

Dogs took to him at once. On one occasion he was dining with a party of fourteen guests. When all were seated at the table, in walked a large dog,

never known before to enter the room. The animal took no notice of any one else, but walked straight to the Bishop, looked up into his face, and then laid his huge head on the episcopal knee. The host rose to turn the dog out, but the Bishop stooped down and kissed it on the forehead, saying, 'Dear creature, dear creature! oh, let him stay!' and stay the dog did, neither begging for food, nor disturbing any one, and never moving from his place. How the animal found the Bishop out, or knew him for a friend, is the puzzle. No doubt dogs 'confabulate,' as Cowper tells us—even Rousseau allowed that birds do; but this particular one could hardly have heard of the pet dog that died thirty years before in a Yorkshire parsonage, and to which the future Bishop erected a tomb, with an inscription characteristically written in Greek. How the good Bishop would have appreciated the fidelity of the Bishop of Argyll's dogs, as they watched by poor Maconochie's remains in the deep snow of the Highlands of Scotland. Speaking of the wonderful library at Abergwili, Thirlwall's biographer says: 'Who that has seen it will not remember "Chaos"? Its quiet light, its dim recesses, the cat purring on the hearth, the chairs unavailable until cleared of the books and pamphlets with which, like the tables, they were crowded, the drawers full of unarranged letters, papers, MSS., into which the Bishop, opening them, looked with pitiful and per-

plexed eyes ; yet, when offered help, would invariably answer, "I can seldom find anything in them now, but if they were set to rights for me, I should certainly find nothing then." And over all, the presence that made peace and pleasantness, the life in its outward seeming eventless, within how eventful.'

It was indeed a beautiful life, but the worst of it was that it was known to so few. 'To the world at large,' says Dr. Perowne, 'he was known as the scholar, the historian, the theologian, foremost in the first rank of these, but of the man they knew little or nothing.' Nor did his portraits or photographs, for which he only sat to please his friends, reveal what manner of man he was. The broad forehead, the massive jaw, the intellectual but stern countenance, told of one phase, the smile which occasionally lit up his face told of another. Few who looked at them realised that under that grave aspect was hidden an almost womanly tenderness, a keen sense of humour, and an enjoyment of a merry thought, to be looked for in a Wilberforce, but which was a revelation in a Thirlwall. He was, I think, conscious of an inability to please, and this tended to make him shy and reserved.

His were perhaps not the best qualifications for a Welsh bishop. To his clergy he was very much less accessible than ever was Bishop Lee. Many of them never exchanged a word with him in their lives, even



when they came to be licensed or instituted. 'When I went to be instituted to my present living,' says my old friend, the late Rev. Canon Williams, 'other clergymen came on similar errands. I should have valued a few words of encouragement from my father in God. I was giving up a country benefice, with a college appointment, to take an enormous and neglected parish. We were all shown into a room, and told to stand in a row for the Bishop to pass between us. When he entered, he bowed to us, but did not open his lips. He sat down; we took the oaths; he instituted or licensed each of us; he then rose from his chair, and, while we were signing our papers, kept looking at the books on the shelves, and then, without a word, bowed, and left the room.'

My experience was just the same. I went to be instituted to my living of Tenby, to which I had been nominated by the Crown, and it is considered one of the most important benefices in the diocese. Three other clergymen were ushered into his presence to take the oaths. The secretary instructed each of us to take the New Testament into our hand, and to pass it from one to the other, and to repeat the usual formula. The Bishop was stooping down looking at the folios on the lower shelves of the bookcase, and when the business was over, he took us all in with one sweeping bow, and then disappeared.

‘When shall we see the Bishop?’ asked my friend and curate, the Rev. J. Hearn Poppelwell.

‘See the Bishop?’ replied the secretary. ‘Why, didn’t you see him? He was in the room all the time.’

‘But he never spoke to us,’ rejoined Mr. Poppelwell.

‘What did you expect?’ was the answer. ‘He never does speak on these occasions.’

On what other occasions does he speak? I thought to myself. However, the secretary asked us to luncheon, but the Bishop never made his appearance.

How he hated to be bothered! One day, after the consecration of a church, he and half a dozen parsons had to meet at an out-of-the-way railway station. He went into the waiting-room and sat down with his feet on a chair, and began to cut open and read the *Guardian*. The parsons wanted to be introduced to their Bishop, and I, in a rash moment, undertook to present them. Alas for my blunder! The Bishop gave a look of weariness (no doubt he was tired), and bowed to the clerics in turn. Fortunately the train came up, and his lordship took his place alone in a first-class carriage, we of course in a third, and we saw no more of him. What an opportunity lost! I thought to myself; and so it was. A word to Welsh parsons would have gone a long way, especially from their Bishop, and he an Englishman.

No doubt he had the candidates for ordination at his house during their examination, and I believe that he asked Bishop Wilberforce to come on the first occasion he did ask them, and teach him how to entertain them. But they must have been as sorely trying to him as he was to them. Some of them were mere peasants, destitute of culture, and ignorant of the usages of society. On one occasion a young fellow came from the hill country. He had ridden long and far on a shaggy Welsh pony, and, hungry and tired, was shown up into his room about seven o'clock, after having had served to him a cup of tea and a plate of thin bread and butter. Poor fellow! he had hoped for supper, which at length he gave up in despair, and, seeing the footman light his candles, he wished him good-night, put himself to bed, and soon fell fast asleep. Presently a bell rang, but not so loud as to rouse the sleeper. After a while, in came the footman, whose knocks at the door had been equally ineffectual, and he told the astonished guest—

‘Dinner is served.’

‘Dinner? dinner? Why, what o'clock is it?’

‘Half-past seven, sir.’

So all he could do was to stretch himself and get into his clothes as fast as he could, and go down to the dining-room, where, of course, every one else was seated.

What a study the Bishop's face must have been! Yet hardly more so than when another unfledged divine drank up the water in his finger-glass, once, twice, and when the footman was going to fill it a third time, exclaimed—

‘Please, I can’t sup it three times.’

Two candidates once arrived, and were put into contiguous rooms. Neither could live without smoking, so they came together into one room, lit their pipes,—then strictly forbidden in the palace,—and smoked up the chimney. Alas for their peace of mind! The Bishop slept in the next apartment, the flues were connected, and the tobacco-smoke found its way in and half suffocated his lordship. So at breakfast he looked across the table towards the unconscious youths. ‘Some persons will run a chance of being indicted for manslaughter, for I have been nearly choked by tobacco-smoke.’ Their looks may be more easily imagined than described.

How contradictory he could be, to be sure! I told him that Professor Maurice had preached an eloquent sermon in Tenby Church. Archdeacon Clark was standing by, and said—

‘Not an eloquent sermon. I do not consider Mr. Maurice an eloquent preacher.’

‘Then *I do*,’ said his lordship, and moved away without another word.

A lady friend of mine who sat next to him at

dinner ventured on the remark that a certain well-known writer, Mr. Lewis Morris, did not look like a poet, which certainly he does not.

The Bishop turned on her, and in his most sarcastic tones said—

‘And do you think poets look different from other people?’

I was not present, but I think if I had, I should have taken her part, for I agree with her that poets *do* look different from other people. However, she was shut up, and the Bishop did not open his lips to her again.

A clergyman wishing to please him made a flattering remark on a connection, of whose abilities he had not the highest opinion.

‘He is a very clever man, my lord.’

‘Well,’ was the reply, ‘his intellect, certainly, is unapproachable.’

And he could be severe.

As he sat at dinner one day, a clergyman was announced who had driven forty miles in bad weather to solicit the appointment to a living his father had just that very day vacated by death. The indelicacy of the proceeding shocked the Bishop beyond expression. After considerable parley with the servant, the clergyman entreated his lordship to see him. He consented, but the interview in the lobby lasted three seconds, and was summed up in

three words—‘Go home, sir!’ It need not be said the applicant did not get the living.

He was a kind and indulgent master, and his servants remained with him for years. Yet he seldom spoke to any of them but to his confidential attendant, who accompanied him on his journeys, and between whom and himself there was a thorough understanding.

He would sometimes order dinner for a party, and on being asked, ‘For how many, my lord?’ would reply, ‘I don’t know till they come ; tell the cook to provide plenty.’

On one occasion his robes were not forthcoming.

‘You did not order them to be got ready, my lord,’ said his favourite attendant in excuse.

‘You ought to have thought of them,’ remonstrated his master, somewhat angrily.

‘But your lordship asked for them for three o’clock in the afternoon, and not for the forenoon.’

The robes had to be got ready, and the Bishop was in consequence nearly ten minutes late.

‘What a bad example of unpunctuality you have caused me to set to the diocese!’

Being convinced, however, that it really was his own fault, and not the butler’s, he at once apologised to him.

His valet once sent for a barber to cut his master’s hair. The cloth was duly placed round his shoulders.

‘How will your lordship have your hair cut?’ inquired the barber, scissors and comb in hand.

‘In silence,’ quoth the Bishop.

This reply was from Plutarch, and was one of the innumerable recollections of classical writers with which his capacious mind was stored.

To avoid the annoyance of interviews with his tailor, his old suits were sent to London as patterns, the time of renewal being left to the discretion of his servant. Before this happy arrangement was effected, a local tailor came to take his lordship’s measure, and brought patterns of cloth with him. The tailor asked, ‘What are your lordship’s orders?’

‘I want a suit of clothes.’

‘Here is a very nice cloth, my lord.’

‘Ah!’

‘And this is likewise a good one.’

‘Yes.’

‘Here is another of excellent quality.’

‘Very.’

‘Then which material will your lordship decide upon?’

‘I want a suit of clothes.’

And that was all the answer poor Schneider could obtain.

But the Bishop always dressed like a dignitary, and though his clothes were often faded and worn, and he might have been seen in the neighbourhood

of his palace with an old hat, put on with the rose at the back, he never affected singularity of any kind.

One day a new gardener accosted him as he was walking in the garden with a book in his hand, as usual.

‘How will your lordship have this border laid out?’

No reply. The Bishop walked on.

‘How will your lordship be *pleased* to have this border laid out?’

Still no reply. On the question being repeated a third time, the answer was—

‘You are the gardener, I believe, and I am the Bishop.’

Another day the gardener complained—

‘The hares have eaten up all the carnations, my lord.’

‘Then plant more carnations.’

One of his brightest characteristics was his love of children.

A mutual friend wrote to me: ‘He was very fond of the twin daughters of his nephew and secretary, who lived with him. As soon as they were old enough to sit upright, it was his delight to have them propped up in little chairs, one on either side of him, at his meals, when he would look from one to the other, then lay down his knife and fork, and laugh



aloud at the seeming absurdity of the situation. He used to record the sayings and doings of these children, wrote letters to them in uncial characters, and treasured up their replies.

Here is an incident culled at random from his exquisite *Letters to a Friend*:<sup>1</sup> 'As I have nothing to say, I must report a little anecdote which John told me of his little girl. When her state seemed to be almost hopeless, and she was only kept alive by the most violent stimulants, she woke one night in a kind of dream, and asked for a paint-brush and red paint. She so insisted on it that it was brought to her; and being asked what she wanted to do with it, she said, "Dolly ought to have the measles too," and proceeded to exhibit most glaring symptoms of the disorder on Dolly's face. Is not that almost as good as anything in Andersen?'

Every year he gave a Christmas entertainment of roast beef and plum pudding to the schools at Abergwili, at which he presided. After dinner he used to make a speech. Here is one: 'Boys are like tops. There are some tops that give no trouble, but only need to be set spinning and they will go. These are like good boys. But there are other tops which can only be kept going by constant whipping—these are the naughty boys whom nothing but the rod can keep to their work.'

<sup>1</sup> Edited by Dean Stanley.

He used also to let them have fireworks, and a Christmas tree.

To children he was always sweet and gentle. I see him now in my mind's eye, the first time he was a guest in my house, standing by a chair, on to which he had lifted my little son, so that they might both look over the same psalter at family prayers. I shall never forget his response to my request to give his episcopal benediction to the assembled household. 'Yes, with all my heart ;' and he pronounced it with much feeling.

Two of my little daughters, who had not been told that he was occupying the spare bedroom, unwittingly intruded on him as he stood in his short cassock or apron, without his coat. The children were naturally dismayed, and showed it in their faces.

'Well, my little dears, and what are you looking for?'

'Oh, please, for our Sunday frocks ; we are going to put them on because the Bishop is here.'

'Well, then, come in and get them ; you need not be afraid, for you know Bishops don't bite.'

My son used to go to school at St. Edward's, Oxford, where he had for his chums two of the Bishop's great-nephews. It was a long journey from South Wales, so he was asked to stay a day and a night at the palace *en route*. In the evening a children's party was given. 'Go and pick out the

prettiest girl you can find, and take her in to dinner,' said his lordship. As the two walked into the dining-room arm in arm, he whispered in the boy's ear, 'I commend your choice.'

And this leads me to his sense of humour.

A clergyman asked permission to hold two livings under the prescribed value, as he hoped it would be considered within the prescribed distance. So he sought an interview, during which he unrolled an ordnance-map, and, measuring the scale of miles with a small rule he had brought with him, said—

'You see, my lord, they are within three miles as the crow flies.'

The Bishop put his spectacles on, and followed the measurement.

'Yes, as the crow flies, I see that plainly enough; but then, you know, you are not a crow, and you can't fly. By the turnpike road it is a good four miles, so I cannot permit you to hold the two livings.'

A patron, aggrieved because the incumbent had compromised himself by habits of intoxication, begged his lordship to give his nominee preferment elsewhere.

The Bishop replied, 'Oh, but if *you* had a living in your gift vacant, how would you like to have it made a *penal settlement*?'

Who will ever forget that celebrated charge, which

took five hours to deliver? It would certainly have overtaxed the endurance of the clergy, clever and deep as it was, but for the pleasant anticipation of sitting down, after it was over, to a substantial dinner provided at his lordship's expense. I was at the table when the bill was presented. Finding the amount less than usual, he said, addressing us—

‘My reverend brethren, I think for the future I shall follow mine host's excellent example, and *lessen my charges.*’

Bishop Thirlwall was not a ready speaker, and rather envied, I believe, those who were. Admirable as what he said was, and attentively as he was listened to in Convocation, and the House of Lords, he had every word of his sermons, and even of his confirmation addresses, written.

Some one told him of a dilemma I got into. I was asked to preach before the College of St. David at Lampeter. When I ascended the pulpit, I found that I had left both my Bible and my notes behind. Fortunately, I remembered the text, and on I went without breaking down.

When the Bishop heard of this, he said, ‘I know of no clergyman in my diocese so likely to make such a blunder, and I know of no clergyman in my diocese better able to get out of it. But, for my own part, I keep feeling in my pockets for my manuscript during the service, and when I am going up the pulpit stairs

I feel again, for fear it should have made its escape during the interval.'

There was an eccentric Archdeacon, in the early part of his episcopate, who always gave his dog his sermon to carry to church. The dog never forgot his duty but once. The Archdeacon gravely told his people from the pulpit, that he was sorry they would have to go without a sermon that morning, for *his dog had mislaid it*. I never heard that the Bishop was down either on the dignitary or his dog. I opine that he appreciated the humour of the one, and the fidelity of the other, and wished that his clergy were generally as reliable—as the dog I mean, not the dignitary. And he liked to be told a good story.

One day, at Tenby Rectory, in my predecessor's time, my old neighbour Mr. Birkett, vicar of St. Florence,<sup>1</sup> one of the best scholars and divines, as well as one of the quaintest men in the diocese, was telling the guests at dinner a few stories about old-fashioned Pembrokeshire parsons. 'My predecessor,' said Mr. Birkett, 'must have been a very simple man, and as a proof I'll tell you what he did. Well, the cow-doctor came to give the parson's cow a draught. The parson, not being very well, consulted the cow-doctor, and had a similar draught concocted for himself; for he concluded that what's good for beast

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*—'A George Herbert of the Nineteenth Century.'

is good for man, and what's good for man is good for beast.'

'What?' said the Bishop, who had never taken his eyes off the teller; 'did he take the cow drink, and did he live to tell the story?'

'Yes, my lord, he lived twelve years after.'

'I see; he died *post hoc*, but not *propter hoc*;' and he laughed till his shoulders shook.

Another of Mr. Birkett's stories amused the Bishop. It was of our neighbour Mr. Smith, rector of Gumfreston,<sup>1</sup> how he managed to shoot a hare that was eating up the produce of his garden, and especially his favourite parsley bed.

There is very little snow in Pembrokeshire, but on this occasion there had been a downfall, and the hedges and trees were covered. So Mr. Smith determined to catch his hare, previous, no doubt, to skinning him. To do this, he put on his surplice and a white straw hat, loaded his gun, and banged away at poor unconscious pussy, who, of course, could not distinguish his foe for the surrounding snow, and fell a victim to his ignorance. The Bishop observed that it was a novel use of the surplice, and he was glad that it had raised no opposition in the parish; it was the time of the surplice riots. But his sympathies were entirely with the hare, and I fancy he thought it an underhand proceeding. So they were

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*—'A Pembrokeshire Parson.'

when a lion-hunter was relating his adventures, how his gun had missed fire, and how, instead of turning on him, the lion made away for the jungle.

‘Dear creature! and you know he didn’t go after *you* with a gun to take away *your* life.’ This was not in the spirit of a sportsman, but it *was* in that of St. Francis and St. Anselm.

Seemingly two men could hardly have presented greater contrasts than Bishop Thirlwall, and Bishop Wilberforce. It is well known that they had come into conflict in Convocation in some debate on the use of the Athanasian Creed, and also in the House of Lords; which caused the former considerable annoyance. Yet this is the way Wilberforce wrote in his journal of his visit to Abergwili: ‘Mr. Thirlwall drove us to the station. Nothing could exceed the brotherly kindness of the Bishop of St. David’s throughout. I seem to understand him now thoroughly, and highly value him. I am heartily sorry that in early debates in the House of Lords I attacked him somewhat sharply, thinking him a latitudinarian. I see now that he is *very* liberal in his opinions of others, but sound himself—of a very fair and even merciful mind, a high sense of honour, and a broad generalising view of each subject which is brought before him, not a man of practical gifts.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Bishop Wilberforce.* By his son Reginald Wilberforce. Vol. ii. p. 256.

The respect was mutual. 'I was deeply grieved wrote Thirlwall, 'at the sad news of the Bishop of Winchester. To all appearance he had in him at least ten years of unabated vigour, and perhaps increasing usefulness. Though for some time past his views on several important questions had been diverging from mine, I have no doubt that he was quite sincere in the memorable last words which he uttered in the House of Lords. But that which is now uppermost in my mind, is the remembrance of his habitual kindness, and of the many instances in which it was shown to myself, and of the singular charm of his society.'<sup>1</sup>

How qualified he was to meet the intellectual difficulties of the day may be seen from the following extract, which I select almost haphazard from his correspondence:<sup>2</sup>—

'I would not say that it is too bold to call the Bible "The Biography of God"' (a term Mr. Lyttelton had used), 'with such limitations as you add to the phrase. But I prefer the description given in a later page, a record of the divine education of mankind. But I think even this description needs a further limitation, and that the education of which the Bible is a record is only the moral and religious education.

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Canon Perowne, July 22, 1872.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to the Hon. and Rev. W. H. Lyttelton, in return for a sermon and No. 12 of Tracts for Priests and People bearing on the Holy Scriptures. January 22, 1867.



But to this in later times, and in some sense it may be said in our own day, there has been added a new branch of education,—the scientific,—which in itself is perfectly distinct from the other, and not only no part of the religious and moral development, but apparently rather at variance with it, for it has introduced man to the knowledge of a vast system of secondary causes, previously unknown and unsuspected, which seem to separate him from God, and to exclude the idea of the immediate divine presence and agency, which was the condition of his early piety. Whether it really does this, or only seems to do it, is the question of deepest interest to all religious minds. If that system of secondary causes is, as men of science are apt to regard it, an adamantine clockwork without any provision for continual adaptation to varying circumstances, it is to my thinking of the smallest possible importance whether we admit or deny the being of God. For, at the best, He is now *functus officio*, and enjoying an everlasting holiday, only differing from the epicurean inasmuch as it has been earned by work now done. The great problem of our day seems to me to show that the childlike belief of man's early days is consistent with the fullest acceptance of all scientific truth, and that there is no reason why this should quench faith or stifle prayer. I think that an important step is gained when it is shown that science at least does not and

cannot disprove this, and that it is consistent with all our experience of human action. The Duke of Argyll's *Reign of Law* is a most valuable aid to thought on this subject. The fact is, that people have been stunned by the rapid rush with which science has been advancing within our generation, and are only now beginning to collect themselves, and to take a stand from which they can survey the phenomena soberly and calmly. But if I am not mistaken, they *are* beginning.'<sup>1</sup>

True as those words were when they were penned, how much truer they seem now after the lapse of twenty years. His accuracy of thought made him accurate in writing. He was not eloquent, and rather given to the use of long words, but then every word expressed clearly its definite meaning. To coin a Johnsonianism, he had the erudition of a scholar without his prolixity, and the profundity of the philosopher without his speculations: words which, by the way, suggest a parody of the good old Doctor's style invented by one of his critics, I forget by whom. Johnson is supposed to be speaking of a pedantic woman, a race for which he had a special aversion: 'She had the contortions of the Sybil without her inspiration, the nodosity of the oak without its robustness.'

But Thirlwall was no mere Stoic philosopher. 'That was no cold or callous heart which found its chief

<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Bishop Thirlwall*, p. 256.

earthly comfort in the faithful affection of those who grew up around him, as his own children and grandchildren, receiving instruction day by day from the boundless stores of his knowledge, and attracted by his paternal care. That was no proud or hard spirit which lived a life of such childlike simplicity, with the innocent enjoyment of his books, or of his dumb creatures, or in steady obedience to the frequent call of often irksome duty, or in humbly waiting for his Master's call. It was an undesigned but impressive coincidence that during the last days of his life, when blindness had closed his eyes, he employed his vacant hours by translating (through successive dictations), into Latin, Greek, German, Italian, Spanish, French, Welsh, the striking apologue which tells us that, as "Sleep is the brother of Death, thou must be careful to commit thyself to the care of Him who is to awaken thee, both from the death of Sleep, and the sleep of Death," and which tells us further that the outward occurrences of life, whether prosperous or adverse, have no more effect than dreams on our real condition, since virtue alone is the real end and enduring good. These words, thus rendered with all the energy of his unbroken mind into those seven languages, contain by hazard, yet surely not without significance, the two simple, sublime elements of religion—the two conclusions which, not only in those closing hours, but in the fulness of his life, penetrated

his reason and his faith,—unwavering reverence for the supreme goodness of God, unshaken conviction of the true grandeur of goodness in man. Suddenly the summons came.’

The *Times* was not wrong when it described him, in its review of his *Essays, Speeches, and Sermons*, as not only foremost in the intellectual ranks of the clergy, but, by almost universal consent, foremost in the intelligence of Great Britain.

Yes, he was all this; but still, I think, those who knew him, and survive him, will remember him less for his great dialectic powers, than for that large-heartedness which embraced ‘All things both great and small.’

<sup>1</sup> Sermon by Dean Stanley in Westminster Abbey.

V.

A George Herbert  
of the Nineteenth Century:

BIRKETT OF ST. FLORENCE.

**S**TRETCHING inland from the sea which washes the coast of Pembrokeshire till it reaches Milford Haven lies the interesting vale of St. Florence. In winter, open as it is to two seas, it is swept over by storms ; but in spite of this, there are many sheltered nooks, many wooded knolls, where rooks delight to build, many an ancient hamlet, and many a grey church tower. This picturesque valley is full of old memories and associations. Where now is marshland, intersected with winding streams in which disciples of Izaak Walton ply rod and line for speckled trout, and sportsmen level their guns for herons, wild ducks, and snipes, a broad estuary once bore on its tidal waves vessels freighted with goods for the inmates of the mansions and farmsteads about. Hard by are the solitary ruins of Scotsborough and Trefloyne, whose

owners held out in vain for the Martyr King. There also is a ravine, dark with evergreen pines and silver firs, where it is popularly believed the Grey Lady at twilight still rides her spectral mare, and hands down in her own person traditions of past evil deeds. Here and there are limestone rocks and headlands dotted with luxuriant vegetation, and in these rocks and caves were bones of extinct hyenas and tigers, till collectors cleared them out, as, alas! they have done with the indigenous ferns for which the county was once noted. And so the vale spreads westward, and there in its broadest part towers the lordly castle of Carew, beauteous in its desolation, battered by Cromwell's Ironsides, the scene of many a princely gathering, and noble tournament. Farther on is the palace of Llamphey, the seat of the mediæval churchmanship, and the prelatic power of the great Bishops of St. David's.

In the midst of this vale lies the village of St. Florence, made up of quaintly-built cottages clustering round the massive Norman tower of the church, its chancel and transepts, roofed with rubble as solid as if hewn out of the living rock, and girt in with farmsteads, whose round chimneys and antiquated gables pronounce them to be of Flemish origin, and of the dates when religious prejudices drove sturdy Flemings, like Wilkin Flammock, to seek in England and Wales the protection for themselves and their

trade denied them elsewhere. At St. Florence geese and ducks, unwitting of peas and onions, rejoice with their owners in the stream that supplies the hamlet with perennial water, over which one must cross carefully by an uneven bridge. Pigs, happily ignorant, too, of their destiny, march about, the undisturbed occupants of the green ; and just across the road is the Vicarage, covered with roses and honeysuckle, the home of the saintly old priest who, during half a century, for his learning, simplicity, good churchmanship, and poetic fervour, might well be called, as in later days he was called, 'a George Herbert of the nineteenth century.' His character, indeed, was so unique, that, especially in these times, when the Church in Wales, and her clergy, are the subjects of so much misrepresentation, it may be well to save his honoured name from oblivion.

Birkett of St. Florence, 'dear old Mr. Birkett,'—or, to give him his full title, the Rev. George William Birkett, M.A.,—was the son of the Rev. Joseph Birkett, vicar of Stranton by West Hartlepool, in the county of Durham, and came of an old-fashioned Cumberland stock. Stranton, at that time a secluded fishing village, is now lost in the growing seaport just named.

The vicar of Stranton was a man of culture, versed in classical and general lore, and much given to hospitality. He took great pride in his extensive library, and to find room for his beloved books,

filled his house with them, walls, staircase, and lobby, up to the very door. A disciplinarian of the old school, he exercised an authority over his son that would astonish lads in these degenerate days. Every morning father and son were in the study by five of the clock. George lighted the fire, laid on the night before, and prepared the early breakfast of oatmeal porridge, the meal brought from Cumberland. Then they read Latin, Greek, and divinity together till a later breakfast at half-past eight; then an hour's work in the garden; then study till one; then dinner; and for the rest of the day his father went about his parish, or to his books, and George did what he pleased. The gardens were noted for vegetables and fruit, and the kind old vicar used to bring in the boys and girls to eat the strawberries and gooseberries. So, as an old acquaintance says, 'Our Mr. Birkett must have inherited his kindness to schoolboys from his father.' Birkett got his schooling at Durham Grammar School, where the late 'Father' Faber, nephew of George Stanley Faber, Prebendary of Durham, and Master of Sherbourne Hospital, a scholar and divine, was one of his schoolfellows. The only recollection, however, Birkett had of his chum, was his inordinate love for bonbons, with which his pockets were filled. Was this typical, I wonder, of the sweetness of Faber's hymns, and of his temper in controversy? Did the two cap verses together? One Durham story Birkett



used to tell, though it must have occurred some years after he left school. The scene was Durham Cathedral, the time a dark winter's afternoon. The sermon was just ended; the preacher, Dr. Phillpotts, Bishop of Exeter, was about leaving the pulpit, when a deep, sepulchral voice, from the gloom of the nave, was heard to exclaim, 'Come down, thou man of Belial, come down!' The preacher was unmoved; but when the excited congregation dispersed, the speaker was found to be none other than Jonathan Martin, the crazy incendiary of York Minster.

In due time Birkett proceeded to St. John's College, Cambridge, where he would doubtless have taken high classical honours had the Tripos been instituted.

As it was, he studied mathematics, for which he had no liking, with steady perseverance, and took an honourable place as Senior Optime. His first curacy was at Oswestry, under the Rev. T. Salvey, a Fellow of St. John's, who, as sinecure rector of St. Florence, appointed his old curate vicar. At Oswestry he made the acquaintance of a local doctor, a man of some note, father of the well-known Archdeacon Robert Wilson Evans, author of *The Rectory of Valehead*, *The Ministry of the Body*, and *The Bishopric of Souls*. Dr. Evans good-naturedly suggested to Birkett that, instead of coming to him about every trifling ailment, he should learn something of medicine himself. So he lent him books, gave him valuable hints; and thus

his knowledge of medicine did good service in time to come.

Among other intimate friends was Robert Southey, whose 'Colloquies' and 'Doctor' he was in the habit of quoting, and much of whose 'Thalaba' and 'Curse of Kehama' he could repeat from memory. He was a great admirer of the Lake poets, and knew Wordsworth and Coleridge. Byron's genius he thoroughly appreciated. Scott's chivalry was very charming to him. Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, and Shakespeare he knew well; but I doubt if all the dramas in our language gave him half the pleasure of one Greek play.

Two other of his acquaintances were Whewell and Sedgwick, both north countrymen. Sedgwick I used to meet on my annual visits to Cambridge as the guest of my lamented friend Beamont, Master of Whewell's Hostel, and only son of William Beamont, the Lancashire antiquary. Whewell I only encountered once, and thought him the greatest bear I had ever seen, and less mindful of the susceptibilities of other people even than Thirlwall; but then the world has seen only one Whewell, and one Thirlwall. You are prepared for peculiarities in very great men.

When Birkett came into Wales, it was an unknown country to an average Englishman. Good folks, who wrap themselves up in warm rugs, and take possession of snug corners in railway carriages, little know the

pains and perils of a journey through the heart of Wales in the days of their grandfathers. Why, it took eight horses to pull the Carmarthen coach up the craggy ascent of the old road out of Tenby! And so roundabout was the route, so uncertain the arrivals, so expensive the stages, that Birkett used to go from Durham by way of Liverpool to Dublin, thence to Wexford, recross the Irish sea to Milford Haven, where, weather permitting, passengers and merchandise were landed on a floating barge, and thence in a rowing boat up Pennar Pill to Pembroke, and so on to St. Florence.

There were no schools till Birkett started them, and even after the schoolmaster was abroad, it must have taken time to root out their queer notions; for years after, a girl in the Sunday school was asked if she knew any one beside our Lord who worked miracles. 'Yes, sir. John of the Ridge'—a reputed wise man, who lived on the Ridgeway, the road along the hill above the village.

A venerable Archdeacon, a native of Pembrokeshire, remembers seeing Parson Hancock sitting with Farmer Williams on each side of the fire, with a long clay pipe and mug of ale on each hob, the parson in wig and buckles. A deputation came to Dr. Humphreys, then Rector of Tenby, to ask him to lay a ghost which haunted their parish. On his asking why they came to him when they had a parson of

their own, they explained that it was only an Oxford scholar who could lay a ghost. 'I am afraid, then,' said the doctor, anxious to be let off without giving offence, 'you have come to the wrong man ; for, you see, I am a Cambridge man.'

When one thinks of the well-ordered churches and parishes of our days, it is hard to credit the state of things when Birkett came into Wales in the year 1829. The churches were many of them in ruins : in one, the rain came through the roof just over the pulpit, and the parson preached under an umbrella held over his head by the clerk ; in another, a goose was sitting in the pulpit, so the minister preached from the reading-desk. At St. Florence the cocks and hens roosted in the church, and a horse was kept in the porch for want of a stable ; in the midst of the village was a cock-pit, where the farmers—I hope not the parson—met to bet. A neighbouring squire, who outraged all the proprieties, gave a piece of land on which to build a Baptist chapel. He did it to spite the parson ; so he insisted on the insertion in the deed of conveyance of a clause enabling him to preach whenever he pleased. I never heard, however, that he claimed his privilege.

Birkett used to tell a story of a former neighbour, the then vicar of Manorbier, whose predecessor asked him, then a curate, to take his duty when he was going from home. So, when Sunday came, the

zealous young fellow made his way through rain and storm over the high lands to Manorbier. On his way to church, he had to pass the parsonage, where, standing in the doorway, who should meet his gaze but the figure of the jolly Welsh parson, all agape with astonishment. 'What! and is it you? Come in, come in! Who ever looked for you on such a day, and such a storm? I thought it best to stop at home. We never expected you, and there'll be no service.' The curate's rising indignation was overpowered by the kindness and hospitality of the Vicar, who was as much distressed, as astonished, at the arrival of his visitor. In another parish there was no service for three weeks. When the parson did appear, a young couple presented themselves to be married. They had put in the banns, but they had never been published. The parson, however, was equal to the occasion, so he called the names over three times that morning, and married them straight away. No inquiry was made nor fault found.

But what could you expect? Bishop Copleston lived at his deanery at St. Paul's. Bishop Watson never set his foot in his diocese. Bishop Burgess travelled about in his coach-and-four. None of these prelates knew a word of Welsh; and the poor candidates for holy orders, many of them farmers' sons, had to make their way to England in stage waggon, like country parsons of Goldsmith's days,

only they had so much farther to go. After all, I doubt if these Welsh villages or their parsons were worse than they were a century ago in England, if we may judge from Smollett's and Fielding's novels, and Hogarth's pictures. Habits, whether good or bad, hold their own longest in remote places.

It was an out-of-the-way sphere for a gentleman, scholar, and genial companion, yet there he set as bright an example of what a parish priest's life should be as his prototype in the beginning of the seventeenth century ; and what Bemerton was, *mutatis mutandis*, St. Florence might fairly be considered. Birkett did all the doctoring for his poorer neighbours, and so outdid the charmers and wise women, and many a doctor's bill he saved, to say nothing of the kitchen physic he as freely dispensed. Moreover, he made wills, drew up indentures, reconciled disputes, discouraged litigation, for which the Welsh are quite as much disposed as the Irish ; he taught his people to be frugal, and managed their benefit-club for them, besides recommending the well-conducted lads and lasses for situations. He also took the aged and respectable poor into his special consideration, and made proposals to the Poor Law Commissioners to provide almshouses for them, in lieu of driving them to the workhouse, or forcing them to mend the roads.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this, as in many other matters, showing himself to be before his time, for these very proposals are likely to come before Parliament.

But, like Herbert, he maintained discipline, and, on a grave case of scandal, solemnly excommunicated the offender.

Birkett built the parsonage,—planned by his wife, who died many years before I knew him,—and he restored his church, in which he took great pride. He always kept it open ; and few things pleased him more than for any one who could really appreciate it to pay it a visit. It is, as I intimated, only separated from the parsonage by the road, so that when carriages drew up, he was on the look-out for visitors. Sometimes he asked them into the house, and if there were ladies, gallantly presented them with flowers. Scholars delighted to meet him, and were amazed at his acquirements and acquaintance with antiquities and folk-lore.

It used to be my privilege to shake off my cares by a walk out to St. Florence by the valley, and to return in the cool of the evening, when the sweet notes of birds from every hedge and tree made the very air melodious. Sometimes we strolled into the church, and then into the glebe fields, where he patted his cows, or into the garden, where he would gather me flowers to take home. Sometimes we had a chat with his man, a quaint character, who faithfully served him and his successor for many years, and who is, I believe, still living. One of his crotchets was that he looked on a clergyman as lacking in common

sense in proportion to his book-learning—always, however, excepting his master. One story old Dawkins got to hear, of a college Fellow, who after his appointment to a country living, went round his parish, and asked at house after house why the good wives did not come to church on Sunday afternoons. ‘Milking the cows,’ was the universal answer. So on Sunday morning he determined to speak his mind, and out it came. ‘I have been round the parish, and find you all make the same excuse’ (I should say that the text was, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come’), ‘you are “milking the cows.” Now, I have only one thing to request, and that is, that you milk your cows the last thing on Saturday night, and the first thing on Monday morning.’ Quoth Dawkins: ‘Who could hearken to a man, in the pulpit or out of it, after that? But then, you see, he’s a book-larnt man.’ A town parson was by one day when Birkett was looking at his cows. ‘Poor old lady, poor old lady,’ said he, apostrophising one quietly chewing the cud. ‘I’m afraid we must soon part company!’ ‘But why?’ exclaimed the parson. ‘To go to the butcher’s.’ ‘To go to the butcher’s! Why, I always thought cows died a natural death, and that we only ate oxen.’ Dawkins was on the other side of the hedge, emitting sundry ‘pishes’ and ‘pshaws.’ So Birkett, with a twinkle in his eye, looked across at him. ‘What do



you think of that, Dawkins?’ Dawkins: ‘Wherever has he hid himself all his days? But then, twinkling back at his master, ‘he’s a scholar, isn’t he? He never ate cow beef! He! he! he!’

Then we used to go back into the house for tea, when the conversation would turn on matters political and ecclesiastical, or on what delighted him much more than either politics or polemics—on Greek criticism, especially on his favourite Homer, or on the New Testament, or the Septuagint. At other times, feeling the truth of the old Horatian maxim, *Dulce est desipere in loco*, he would enliven the evening with stories and anecdotes, of which he possessed an ample fund.

Three of these visits he called his red-letter days. One, when I took my cousin, the late Dr. Dykes, to see him. The greater part of the evening was spent with the choir in practising sacred music, of which due notice was given by the tolling of the church bell. In fact, the training of the choir was one of his greatest pleasures, with which he allowed nothing to interfere. If the truth must be told, however, it was more than a pleasure, it was a hobby; and there are those who aver that a good voice, and aptness for singing, was a stronger recommendation to him in engaging a servant than skill in cooking or house-cleaning. However, he never found fault if his meat were either over or underdone, and he liked to hear the maids singing over their work; for, as he said, it

shows that they are contented and happy. I am afraid that Birkett's recollection must have rather failed, or he was carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, when he asked Dr. Dykes, then precentor of Durham, if he really thought the St. Florence choir inferior to that of Durham. Dykes hesitated, but got out of the difficulty by saying, '*Mutatis mutandis*, no'! Dykes asked me, on our way back, if I thought he had told a white lie. As we got to a solitary part of the road, a furious dog sprang at us. I started back; but when I looked at my companion, the dog was licking his hand. I had often heard of the power of musical men over savage animals, but I never saw it so plainly shown before.

Birkett put an organ into his church, and engaged a peasant girl to play it; so he sent her into Tenby to a German professor, the then organist of St. Mary's, for lessons. The professor looked at her hands, coarse and red with farm-work. 'I vill not teach you; go home and milk de cows.' But when Birkett asked him to try her, he soon found occasion to respect her talents. The good vicar used to give an annual concert at Tenby, followed by a supper, and after that a drive home in a brake. He conducted the concert himself, copied out the music, and gave his singers white gloves for the occasion. I have heard that the local drapers were a little puzzled to fit them. 'My object,' said he, 'in so perseveringly

encouraging music in the people is not for their amusement, or even as a diversion from demoralising recreations, but as a mode of refining and elevating their tastes and feelings.'

The second red-letter day was when Bishop Ellicott was my companion. Birkett saw us coming up the village, and went to meet us. 'Welcome, welcome, Huntington, and any of your friends.' But when he recognised the Bishop, he uncovered his head, and, hat in hand, approached his lordship. Tea was presently spread, with rashers of savoury ham, home-cured, and some luscious grapes; and the conversation turned on the respective merits of Lord Derby's and Mr. Gladstone's translations of Homer. 'Gladstone has the most accurate rendering of the Greek; but Lord Derby has the most poetic fire,' said Birkett, his eyes sparkling with enthusiasm.

On the way home, the Bishop observed, 'Your friend has not only not gone back in his scholarship during the forty-five years he has spent in that remote village, but he has positively gone on with the critical scholarship of the day.'

The third red-letter day was when Dr. Farrar walked out with me to see him. We talked about what then must have been uppermost on that now noted writer's mind, his projected Life of Christ, and on St. Paul and Seneca, and the probability of their having ever met. Birkett adhered to the old notion,

—since revived, by the way,—that the apostle and the philosopher not only knew each other's writings, but were known personally.

During his short annual holidays at Tenby, his recreation reading used to be a Greek play, Horace, and the Greek Testament, which he studied critically every day.

Like most north countrymen, Birkett had a keen sense of humour; he loved an epigram, too, but most if it were couched in Greek. One of his favourite anagrams was that of King Charles I. on Pilate's question, 'What is truth?'—

'Quid est veritas?  
Est vir qui adest.'

He agreed with Dr. Johnson that this is the finest anagram in Latin, or any other tongue.

He so often puzzled me with his superior classical lore, that I tried to have my revenge. We were both in the garden at the vicarage, looking at some plums on which the wasps (there was a plague of wasps that year) were making great havoc. So I turned to Birkett: 'Why must those wasps be Nonconformists?' 'Because they are so noisy?' 'No. 'Guess again.' 'Because they are so unscrupulous with regard to what doesn't belong to them?' 'No.' 'Give it up.' 'Because they are in sects (insects).'

Birkett was a divine of the old-fashioned Anglican school. His favourite authors were Barrow, Hooker, and Waterland, and his friend, the late Professor J.

J. Blunt, of Cambridge. An old pupil, like him in many ways, said, 'He taught me to love Barrow, and to see that there was a matter of interest in the *differential calculus*. He came to St. Florence to do the will of Him that sent him, not in a spirit of self-assertion, but taking cheerfully the lowest place. He was one of the holdfasts of society. All that came under his happy influence were, as I think, helped and stirred up to love and good works.'<sup>1</sup>

The beauty of his character was its simplicity, and nothing could induce him to go from his early hours and quiet habits. He lived among his people, visited them from house to house, and had a kind word and kinder smile for the children. His preaching was calm and unimpassioned, but instructive, often flavoured with old-world scholarship which he never obtruded, but could not always keep back. He was on the best terms with all his parishioners, Dissenters included: the resident preacher was his guest at his tithe dinners, and used to propose the parson's health.

Of Birkett's poetry, R. Wilson Evans wrote in a letter, which I have now before me, faded and discoloured: 'You have a good ear for the construction of blank verse, as well as a quiet eye for nature, and your descriptive parts are both faithful and musical.' His *Christian Precepts and Proverbs*, though much shorter, recall Herbert's *Jacula*

<sup>1</sup> The late Archdeacon Allen. See *infra*—'A Good Archdeacon.'

*Prudentum* and *The Christian Paradoxes or Maxims*, attributed to Bacon, but now known to be the production of an old Puritan divine, one Herbert Palmer, B.D. It was one of many proofs how Birkett lived in the past. Birkett retained his love for his Cumberland home, Evans for the Welsh hills. 'The scenery,' says he, 'about Keswick is certainly very lovely, and I do not wonder at your desire to retire and live amidst it, especially since to you it has that without which even mountain scenery fails in full effect upon us—the associations of early years and ancestry. Hence it is that I can never twine around these mountains the same delightful feeling which I did around the Welsh in my fatherland.' How dearly he loved nature in all its forms may be seen from the following, which I copy from some of the dear old man's letters: 'May 9.—Our village and vale are beginning to put on their beautiful spring garments, and no other little spot that I know of shows such a variation between its winter and summer aspects.' A month later: 'The glory of our village is in its flowering shrubs and trees. The hawthorn is over, and the large laburnum, called here, the "golden chain," is losing its bloom, and the brilliancy of the spring green is growing darker and duller. But as some compensation, the moss-rosebuds are preparing to exhibit themselves, and I hope to have a knot of them for the ladies to take home. We have hitherto

had only two swarms of bees. Both came off last Tuesday within five minutes of each other. The last swarm joined its forces with the first, and jointly occupy the same hive. Whether the little immigrants consider themselves compound householders or lodgers I do not know, but perfect amity seems to prevail, and I think the time has gone by for Syrian and Trojan to separate.'

Preferment never reached him. So Birkett lived on with what to other men would have been the mortification of seeing clergymen, in every way his inferiors, preferred before him. Why he was never made canon or prebendary of St. David's, for which he would have been so eminently qualified, especially when such distinctions were in the gift of one he esteemed so highly as he did Bishop Thirlwall, no one could say. Birkett, as a canon of St. David's, would have been pre-eminently at home.

His last public appearance was at the primary visitation of the present Bishop of St. David's, which he attended from a strong sense of duty, and at the cost of much suffering. He died at Tenby, whilst taking his annual holiday. A few hours before his death he was heard to utter those sublime words of St. Paul: 'Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself.'

He was followed to his grave by friends and neighbours, by his brother clergy, by his surviving relations, and by all his parishioners, and by many others who had walked or driven out from Tenby and the villages around, to take their last farewell of 'dear old Mr. Birkett,' as it was their custom to call him. As one who knew him well said of him, 'Peace be with him.' In this diocese (or indeed in any other) there lived no more faithful minister of God, no more earnest, true, childlike Christian, than the vicar of St. Florence.

What George Herbert's latest biographer writes of him might well be affirmed of Birkett: 'His object was twofold, to raise the teacher and to win the people. His views of the pastoral office even in the rudest country hamlet were lofty and glowing, and he recommended the study of Plato for the sake of acquiring the dexterity of Socrates, and applying it to the common intercourse and teaching of a parish. Such men ennoble their brethren by the beautiful union of all that is practical with all that is graceful in life.'

I append one or two extracts from his poems.

ON ANGELIC AGENCY.

Man sleeps beneath a spangled canopy  
Of tented sky,  
In calm and oblivious trance, while to and fro  
Pass friend and foe.  
Good angels or accursèd on the wing,  
To mortal man, or boon or bane to bring.



Swifter than lightning, and than air more free,  
    Their motions be,  
Nor night nor day in ceaseless interchange  
    Impedes their range.  
Invisible in sooth to mortal eye,  
Yet ever watchful, and for ever nigh.

To shreds their fray the universe would rend,  
    And this world end;  
But God restrains the fiends' vindictive rage  
    Lest they engage;  
And clothes with flame the ministers of grace,  
To guard the chosen flock that seek His face.

Who still shall guard, until the crash of doom  
    Shall burst the tomb,  
And the Archangel's trumpet terribly  
    Shall rend the sky,  
And Death's infernal shadow flee away  
Before the splendours of eternal day.

Remember Dothan, and the prophet's prayer,  
    And banish care  
And slavish dread, and trust in strength divine,  
    And be it thine,  
When dangers press, with purgèd eye to see  
    Protecting hosts in fiery panoply.

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## THE HERMIT'S INVITATION TO THE TRAVELLER.

### AN ALLEGORY.

Welcome, traveller from afar,  
    Twilight glimmers in the west.  
Rising dim, the evening star  
    Warns thee of the hours of rest.

Trust not now thy weary sight,  
Swiftly flies the parting day;  
And the spangled veil of night  
Soon shall hide the mountain way.

And I'll halve my meal with thee:  
Curded milk and berries sweet,  
Honey of the thrifty bee,  
Choice repast for stranger meet.

Then we'll talk of Life and Death:  
Life, we know, is on the wing;  
Death is sleep without his breath,  
Sleep is death without his sting.

Life to Death is hurrying fast,  
Death meets Life beyond the grave;  
Death then dies, and yields at last  
Crown and sceptre, dart and glave.

Lift then, ere thou sleep'st to-night,  
Holy hands and heart in prayer,  
And when morning brings the light,  
On thy Father cast thy care.

He shall guide thee on the way  
That thy Saviour trod afore,  
He shall be thy staff and stay,  
Till thy footsteps toil no more.

Welcome, stranger, to the dell  
Where my peaceful hours are spent,  
For within this time-worn cell  
Hope I join to blest content.

## VI.

# An Original Pembrokeshire Parson:

SMITH OF GUMFRESTON.

PEMBROKESHIRE is an old-world county, noted for cromlechs, stone circles, and other objects of prehistoric interest. In its remoter parts grown-up people may still be met with who have never seen a railway or a gaslight. Of great England across the border they know little except by report, and, like the snail, they seldom move from their own plot of ground. The landscape is pretty much what it must have been when the monks looked out from their abbeys, and the barons from their castles. Amongst such a primitive race old superstitions linger on; and so the lonely lanes are believed to be haunted by spectral funerals, where ghostly forms glide past benighted travellers, and cries of anguish are heard from the spirits of the unshriven dead, and

where, *mirabile dictu*, may be seen possessed pigs, whose ancestors may have been fed at Gadara.<sup>1</sup>

Pembrokeshire is in the diocese of St. David's. The saint had good reasons, no doubt, for pitching his tent—I beg his pardon, founding his cell—near the bold headland that bears his name; but, well fitted as it might be for vigil, fast, and prayer, it is a most unget-at-able place for ordinary mortals, and one does not wonder that in mediæval times two pilgrimages to the shrine of St. David used to count for one to Rome. It is a pilgrimage to get to it now. You must first find your way to Haverfordwest, and when you have got there, make up your mind to jolt over sixteen hills, and across sixteen valleys, unless you undertake the walk, and let your luggage be sent after you. On you go till you come in sight of a windmill, and just when you fancy you are at the world's end, there lies before you a prospect you will never forget. It is the ancient Menevia, the 'Palmyra of the West,' the shrine of the patron saint, with the purple-stoned cathedral, the ruined palace of the bishops of St. David's, and the college of the monks, surrounded by lofty cliffs, and rugged capes, and the cluster of islets known as 'the Bishop and his Clerks,' around which the great Atlantic ceaselessly surges.

In days gone by—it may be so yet—there used to be three classes of passengers in the rumbling old

<sup>1</sup> See Wert Sykes' *British Goblins*.

vehicles: one who rode all the way; another who got out to walk up the hills; and another who helped to shove the conveyance on when it stuck fast, which it often did.

A Welsh song has it—

‘ St. David is our patron saint,  
And a famous saint was he.’

Welshmen are proud of him, and wear leeks on his day, the 1st of March. They have perpetuated his name by christening their little boys after him, and handed it down in the numerous clans of Davys, Davies, and Davis, which almost rival the illustrious tribe of Jones with its variations of John, and Johns, and Evans. The Joneses are not fire-eaters, but the innocuous name is the same as *Ivan*. Fancy Mr. Jones of Wales and Ivan the Terrible having the same nomenclature. Every one knows the story of the alarm given by an Englishman at Jesus College, Oxford. ‘Mr. Jones’s room is on fire!’ when instantly up jumped four-fifths of the students; he then cried out ‘Mr. David Jones’; one-half still stood up. I knew a Welsh college where the Joneses were distinguished as ‘Black Jones,’ ‘Red Jones,’ ‘Nosey Jones,’ ‘Humpty Jones,’ and ‘Gentleman Jones.’

In the neighbourhood of St. David’s the Welsh tongue is spoken, although, strange to say, a narrow brooklet divides the English from the Welsh-speaking parts. It is a hard language, and took Bishop Thirlwall a year to learn; but there was an Englishman

promoted to a living who was told he could learn it in a night ; so he sat up till Sunday morning, drinking all the time with the clerk, who undertook to instruct him how to get through the service on the morrow. Who can wonder at Welshmen being Dissenters !

Every now and then one meets with marked characters, who stand out from amongst their fellows for genius or eccentricity. Such was Hawker of Morwenstow, in Cornwall, and such was 'Smith of Gumfreston,' of which place he was for some half a century rector.

Gumfreston is not a village in the English sense, hardly a hamlet, for it is made up of a few scattered farmhouses and cottages, and has only a population of about sixty. The church is small, old, lichen and ivy-clad, with a well-proportioned tower, built, no doubt, for purposes of defence. A few trees cluster around, affording a grateful shade in summer, for wood is scarce in the neighbourhood. The interior is bare of ornament, except some fading frescoes, on the deciphering of which a wealth of learning has been spent, though with small results, and its one treasure is an ancient sanctus bell. In the spring-tide rooks and jackdaws caw around the belfry, and in the marsh below\* wild ducks and plovers utter their plaintive cries. The Rectory, since rebuilt, and thereby losing many of its picturesque features, is close by, and what would be a village green is

a contracted space where cows are milked, geese gabble, and pigs grunt. In fact, owing to common-rights, pigs and geese enjoy a freedom rarely possessed out of Wales—the pigs are not shut up, nor the geese housed, except at night. You may see them any day on Begelly Common, two or three miles from Gumfreston, homeward bound, retiring precisely at the same hour, the old gander giving the note of march, when his ‘quack, quack’ is taken up by his wives, and then responded to by the pigs grunting in chorus. These wise birds (who would mind being called a goose after that?) know to a moment when the good wife is ready with their food, and woe to her if not, for they will raise a deafening din about her ears. The lanes are narrow, and the hedges high; the farming is primitive, and the meadows are unbroken by the plough. Hence Devonshire itself is not fuller of primroses, daffodils, violets, holly, roses, whitethorn may, honeysuckle, gorse, and ferns, to say nothing of the mallows and irises which grow along the marshes and pools. This good old priest was fond of nature in every form; he was a bee-master, and would astonish his friends by walking about with his hands covered with live bees, all of which he said knew him; he knew the habits of birds and beasts, fishes and reptiles; and took an interest in every creature that walks, or flies, or crawls. Woe to any one overdriving a horse or an

ass up Gumfreston Hill ; down he would come on the delinquent with his severest rebuke, ending, however, in his helping the horse or horses along.

But his study of nature was in the remotest past. Even cromlechs were modern to him. It is true he delved into tumuli and barrows, and unearthed the ashes of prehistoric forefathers ; but his vision ranged far beyond man's appearance on the earth. He mused of an age when the vale of St. Florence was a sea, and the Bristol Channel and the Severn Sea a valley, wherein roamed those interesting mammals, the woolly tiger, the mammoth, the hyæna, the cave bear, and the wild horse, whose bones he loved to excavate out of the caverns, where they once lived and reigned as the undisputed lords of the then existing creation.

It was a sight to see him set out for a day's digging, clad in a suit the reverse of clerical, his head covered with a broad-brimmed straw hat, armed with shovel, pick, and hammer, and looking as like a navvy as did Sedgwick, who was once taken for a road-mender, when on a geological tour, by a lady of rank, who gave him a shilling out of sheer compassion for his destitute appearance. This lady had been specially invited to meet the learned professor at a neighbouring mansion, and he took her in to dinner. So what did Sedgwick do but tell the story at the table. 'Here's the very shilling,' said he, taking one out of his pocket.



One of Smith of Gumfreston's favourite resorts was Hoyle's Mouth, a cavern in the immediate neighbourhood, the entrance to which resembles that of one of the catacombs at Rome. Here he would spend hours of downright hard labour, and his collection gained such a far-famed notoriety that people went from great distances to inspect it. In the year 1860 he read a paper on 'The Bone Caves of Tenby,' subsequently published. The specimens were duly arranged in glass cases, and have since been purchased for the Tenby museum. In my opinion, however, and in that of a good many more, he himself was the greatest curiosity of all. In person he was tall, well proportioned, with a frame evincing great physical strength; his head was intellectual, his eye as keen as a hawk's, and his beard ample, giving him the appearance of a patriarch of old; in fact, when his photograph was exhibited in one of our shop windows, children might be seen looking at it as a picture of the Father of the Faithful. He was very hospitable, but you never quite knew what reception you would meet, if you called at an inconvenient hour, or woke him up out of his afternoon's nap, an indulgence he was compelled to take owing to his persistency in beginning his studies at five o'clock in the morning. As he usually went to the door himself, it was a chance whether you would gain admission or no; his frequent salutation was, 'What has brought you

here?' And if he suspected curiosity, you might very likely have the door shut in your face.

He was fond of children, and used to invite them to the house ; but his ideas of amusing them were somewhat peculiar. My children were asked to tea ; they had dined early, come a long way through the woods, and were very hungry. Tea was announced, nicely-buttered toast and tempting cakes were on the table, when the old gentleman persisted in unrolling a large map or plan of Stonehenge, and explaining it all for the space of half an hour. I am afraid the children thought he was giving them stones for bread. He had a little girl to spend the day at the Rectory, and he was particularly anxious she should enjoy herself ; so he asked her into the room wherein he took his post-prandial doze, told her she must not make any noise, but sit perfectly still on a stool ; he then gave her Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* to look at. Being a very sensitive child, the hideous figures of burning and impaling and other tortures with which that exemplary volume is full, filled her with horrors, and gave her starts and nightmares for many a week. He was fond of showing what he rather profanely, I should say, called his Trinity ; three beautiful white pigeons, which came to his call, and sat on three points of a portico or penthouse over the front door.

He loved flowers so well that he hardly liked to

see them picked. On one occasion a young girl, tempted by a beautiful rose, stepped aside from the road and picked it. Smith came marching with rapid step from the other side of the garden, followed the girl, who had passed on with her treasure, made her retrace her steps and replace the rose, saying, 'See, you cannot make the rose grow again on its stem ; but let this teach you a lesson, not idly to cut short the life of a flower.'

He soon found out if people knew the subjects they talked about, and nothing delighted him more than to meet with a kindred spirit. If he took a fancy to you, he would ask you to spend a day with him ; but it sometimes happened that he forgot all about it. Some friends paid him a call, and were politely shown in. Incidentally he mentioned his difficulty in raising money for the restoration of the church which he had then in hand. The friends gave him a liberal donation, and a promise of some rose-plants. 'I must be entertaining angels un-awares,' said he, looking towards the ladies of the party. He gave them a cordial invitation for tea and croquet the next Thursday. They came according to appointment, but were told they could not see him till after his nap. At five o'clock he came in. 'Ah, my good friends, you have come to see where I am planting the roses.' He then took them up the lane to see the view. 'I cannot walk any farther

with you ; let us say the Lord's Prayer, and part.' He had forgotten all about the invitation.

A favourite inquiry of his was, 'Have you said your prayers?' and he asked this of every one he met, grown-up people and children. Some ladies, accompanied by two officers of the army, visited the church. 'I want to ask you a question,' said he ; 'will you answer me?' 'Yes, if we can.' On putting it to the ladies, the answer was satisfactory. Seeing the officers getting out of his way, he called them back. 'Did you say your prayers this morning?' 'We are ashamed to say, No.' 'There's grace in you after all, if you are ashamed of yourselves ; so kneel down on that grave, and say the Lord's Prayer with me.' The officers did, and thanked the old man.

Naturally, his originality came out at church, and many of his sayings and doings would have matched Rowland Hill. Rubrics and Acts of Uniformity he cared nothing for ; the good Bishop winked at his irregularities ; he had no 'aggrieved parishioners,' or if he had, he would have had it all out with them at the Easter Vestry. He was reverent in his way, but he never lost an opportunity of showing that he attached no sanctity to places or things, saying, 'I don't believe in holy bricks and holy mortar.' He used to remove the Lord's Table from the chancel wall for the celebration of Holy Communion, and invite his people to sit round it, blaming Laud for

being the author (rightly enough) of the present innovation, as he considered it. On a hot day he would take his surplice off, pull off his coat, and then put the surplice on over his shirt-sleeves, and all in the sight of the congregation. His favourite dog used to follow him to church, where he always kept very quiet. On being remonstrated with, he said, 'Why should not my dog come to church? He is a better Christian than half my parishioners!'

At an autumn evening service, when about to preach, he came out of the chancel carrying a very attenuated candle. 'Before I begin my sermon, I want to speak to you on gratitude for the blessing of artificial light. We are none of us sufficiently grateful for small mercies: this candle, for instance;,' holding it up, from which the grease was dropping. At that time there was no other light in the church.

He had some knowledge of music, and pitched the tunes on an old pipe. His selection must have been a queer one; for, like Moody and Sankey, he adapted any airs he pleased. Once he gave out, 'We'll sing the hymn to the old melody of Robin Adair.' He never lost an opportunity of singing. One day the clergy met at Pembroke station after the ruridecanal chapter. As usual with Welsh railways, the train was late; so, turning to his clerical friends and the farmers and their wives, who had just left the market, he said, 'Now that we are all together, why should

we not sing?' He tried first one hymn, then another, but no one joined. So he burst out with, 'What, cannot any of you sing? Brother Huntington, you try; brother Birkett, you try,' but all to no effect; till at last, with many quaverings, he managed to raise the Old Hundredth Psalm, in which a few joined. Meanwhile, Mr. Birkett, a man of the most refined ear for music, and whose choir was the pride of the country-side, and to whom a false note was as exquisite a torture as a false quantity, could endure it no longer. So he walked up and down the platform, with his hands behind his back. After the train arrived, and we three got into the carriage, Smith asked, 'Birkett, what did you think of our singing?' 'Well, to speak the truth, I thought it very coarse.' 'Coarse, man? Is that all you've got to say? Did it come from the heart?' 'That,' reverently pointing upwards, 'is known only to One. You asked me what I thought of it, and I thought it very coarse.' 'Coarse, indeed! if that's all you've got to say, I repudiate your friendship. I'll have nothing more to do with you.' So he turned his back, and wouldn't take his old friend's proffered hand. However, the next day a letter was received, beginning, 'My dear, my much-tried and much-enduring friend, pray forgive me.' Need it be said that these two acquaintances never had another word of dispute to the day of their death.

Smith's peculiarities used often to draw visitors from Tenby, and they went, if not much belied, to see what he would say and do. One Sunday evening he overheard through the hedge three young men saying one to the other, 'Let's go and have a bit of fun out of old Smith.' Perhaps he remembered a similar incident in the life of Rowland Hill. Anyhow, no sooner were they seated in the church, and he in the reading-desk, than he gave them a look they were not likely to forget. 'So, young men, you've come here to have a bit of fun out of an old man of eighty, have you? I might ask you to leave the church, but I won't; for fools who come to scoff, sometimes remain to pray. Brethren, let us pray for these scoffers.' On another occasion he divided his hearers into three: first, those who feared God; secondly, those who feared men; and thirdly, those who feared the devil! After describing the first, he said, 'The second are a good-natured set of fellows, who will drink with any one, and who will say to any chance acquaintance, Here is a shilling for you (holding one in his hand); the third are those profane men who have driven here from Tenby.' I am afraid my temporary parishioners must occasionally have exasperated him, for he once called out from the pulpit, 'I won't preach till all the Tenby people are out of the church.' The truth is, he thought aloud. He had once been

preaching on his favourite subject, the wonders of creation, and in the course of his sermon he quoted his own published lecture. Catching sight, however, of the publisher in church, he said, 'I see my friend, Mr. Mason, from Tenby, here; you can buy the lecture from him for a shilling; it is cheap at the price.'

He often commented, verse by verse, on the lessons instead of preaching a sermon. Friends of mine were present when the chapter contained the transaction of the daughter of Herodias dancing before Herod. 'Impudent hussy, dancing lewd and nude to amuse an old debauchee in his cups. So when he had sight enough of her, he promised her whatever she might ask, to the half of his kingdom. Half of his kingdom, indeed! Why he had not half, nor a quarter of a kingdom to give. It was not his; he was only a tributary of the Roman Emperor. So she asked her mother. And who should a young lass ask, if a man promises to give her anything, but her mother? Ay, but that depends on the sort of mother. So her mother told her to ask for the head of John Baptist in a charger. What! a dead man's head in a dish! A pretty sight, that, for a young woman! A pretty sort of mother, that! So you see that between them both they danced a saint's head off.' Then glancing at some fashionable folk in church, he added, 'Now mind you, good women, where you dance, and how



you dance, and with whom you dance ; for they tell me there is dancing going on at Tenby that would please Herod a good deal more than it would either me or John the Baptist. Now don't dance your souls away, whatever you do with men's heads, which I daresay you know how to turn with your capers.'

But fond of the country as he was, he did not look on it as an Arcadia ; he knew the shortcomings of his parishioners, and spared no one a well-merited rebuke, or something more than a rebuke. The lax notions of Welsh people on courtship and matrimony are only too well known ; the custom of 'bundling' and of courting at unseemly hours has not yet died out. A stalwart youth thought he would try it on at Gumfreston Rectory. Smith caught him in the kitchen when the family were thought to be at rest ; so he took him by the shoulders and pushed him into a cupboard, where he locked him up, and kept him in durance vile till the morning. The next Sunday the banns were published, and the sermon was on what would now be called 'social morality.'

His preaching was sometimes beautiful, and even sublime, though always quaint. It was like a necklet of pearls ill-set, or jewels strung with pebbles. He was apt at illustration, and would take a flower-pot, or a bird's-nest, or a piece of old pottery, or an

Eastern lamp, or even a fossil bone, into the pulpit, and then hand it round to the congregation.

He had a considerable acquaintance with Rabbinical lore, and used to tell stories and legends from the Talmud, besides illustrating his expositions of Scripture from Oriental customs, and the researches of travellers. In telling anecdotes and using any common incident which struck him, he was as quaint and graphic as Master Hugh Latimer himself. He had a way of picking up ideas younger preachers might follow with advantage, for he used to fix on his subjects early in the week, think them over, and then discuss them openly with friends. He was never dry or tedious; you might smile, but you could not fall asleep under his preaching. His thoughts seemed to flow more freely in the open air, and his intense enjoyment of life made him at once a genial and a profitable companion. I never had much talk with him on his geological pursuits, for I should only have exposed my ignorance, and brought on a well-merited snub.

One day he was delving with a scientific friend, when somehow the conversation turned on the being of Satan. I do not know what suggested it; possibly the weird traditions for which Pembrokeshire is noted. Thus there is on the coast two mighty fissures in which the sea bubbles and boils, which go by the names of 'the Devil's Cauldron' and 'the Devil's

Punch-bowl.' Then there are a number of monolithic stones called the 'Harold stones.' Giraldus tells us that Harold raised them on the western coast after he had ravaged it, and inscribed on each one '*Hic Haroldus Victor fuit*'; but the Pembrokeshire folk say that they were the quoits or bowls with which Harold, magnified by popular superstition into a puissant giant, used to play with the devil. As they went on in their strange unearthly diversion, first the devil flung a stone, then Harold, till the devil picked up a church, and flung it clean into the sea, where you may see it, they say, for yourself at Broadhaven. This was called 'the Devil's Last Throw,' and certainly the rock is wonderfully like a ruined church. He must have been fond of stone-throwing, and, I fear, taught the Welsh boys their naughty habit of stoning dogs and cats and birds, in which I grieve to say practice has made them only too perfect. They say that he was once crossing a valley near Pendine, on the coast, when his apron, filled with stones, broke, and they fell to the ground, where they may still be seen; and also the marks of his club foot as he stepped from one mountain to another, a distance of some ten or twelve miles.<sup>1</sup> When Smith's scientific friend suggested doubts as to the being of the enemy of souls, Smith replied, 'Oh, if I had not believed in

<sup>1</sup> Similar traditions are to be found in Brittany, '*Rocher du pied du Diable*.'

the devil's existence, what a life I should have led at twenty-five !'

People came from a distance to interview him, as the Americans say. One fine summer's day two clerics from the East of England went out from Tenby. They missed the way to the Rectory, and so got astray into the kitchen garden. Nearing the house, they observed a striking figure approaching in a large straw hat (was it the hat in which he shot the hare in the snow ?), a white waistcoat, and grey trousers. It turned out to be Smith. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'you are trespassing.' The friends, moved by his majestic bearing, begged to be forgiven.

'No,' answered the outraged parson, 'I won't forgive you.'

As he said this, he eyed the trespassers from head to foot, till his gaze rested on their headgear,—broad-brimmed soft felt hats, then rather affected by those whom the world called 'Puseyites,' but now common enough. This was what excited his wrath quite as much as the trespass. So, bringing his survey into full focus on their heads, he burst out, 'Oh, what hats ! Do you ever expect to get to heaven in such hats as those ?' The friends might have retorted ; but they only suggested a hope to find a place there, after all.

'No,' said he, 'you won't in those hats ;' which was true enough, no doubt.

On entering the church they were joined by a clergyman and a lady, apparently his wife, who had come with a view of getting some amusement out of the Pembrokeshire parson. Smith detected this at once, and whilst showing the various interesting features of the church, kept asking the stranger whether he knew this, that, or the other, in order to test him, or, more likely, to pose him. He got little in return for his pains—no answers came. All at once Smith broke off in his description of the church, and said most solemnly, ‘Let us pray!’ and then he went through the Lord’s prayer in *Greek*. It looked a somewhat unusual interruption, yet he went through it seemingly as a matter of course, and then resumed his explanations.

After leaving the church, he led the party to see the objects of interest outside, in describing which he showed a knowledge of all kinds of ‘ologies,’ which he had at his finger-ends. His listeners seemed amused; but now was Smith’s time to turn the tables on the flippant cleric. So, after plying him with question after question, he stormed out with withering scorn, ‘I have talked to you about astronomy, geology, botany, and zoology, and I know not what beside. I have asked you about things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, of which you seem to know nothing. *Pray, sir, what do you know?*’ The gentleman addressed was speechless; ashamed,

no doubt, of being exposed before the lady and the strangers. Let us hope that he went home a wiser man. Smith hated pretentiousness in any form, and could detect a charlatan in an instant. On another occasion some other unwary excursionists strolled into his garden. One of them, a lady, pleaded an excuse. 'You opened a gate,' was Smith's retort, 'and didn't know you were trespassing! If you were sorry you would take out your handkerchief and tears would run down your cheeks.'

He was an enthusiastic angler, and used to go to the river-side with his neighbour Birkett. Of this 'auld acquaintance,' one who knew him well says, 'He always reminded me in some respects of Charles Lamb—so simple, so scholarly, so loving.'

Each of the good old men could have said with Izaak Walton, 'When I would beget content, and increase confidence in the power and wisdom and providence of Almighty God, I will walk the meadows by some gliding stream, and there contemplate the lilies that take no care, and those very many other various little living creatures that are not only created, but fed (man knoweth not how) by the goodness of the God of nature, and therefore trust in Him.'

I think they would have sympathised with the last words of Frank Buckland: 'God is so good, so very good to the little fishes, I do not believe he

would let their inspector suffer shipwreck at last. I am going a long journey, where I think I shall see a great many curious animals. This journey I must go alone.'

'Lovely and pleasant in their lives, in their deaths they were not divided.' When Mr. Birkett came to see his ancient friend on his death-bed, Smith said, 'Dear friend, let us say the Lord's Prayer together once more, as we have so often said it. We shall soon not need it at all.' One soon followed the other, and both are now at rest in their quiet churchyards.

Such as Smith was, we shall never see his like again. He belonged to a past order of things; one of those whose youth was spent before railways invaded the seclusion of out-of-the-way places. All his surroundings helped to intensify his strong individuality—

'Remote from towns he ran his godly race,  
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place.'

Simple in an age of ever-growing luxury, primitive in an age of pretentiousness, endowed with the power of digesting and assimilating stores of knowledge, when others skip or skim the surface of some of the numerous shallow works with which the lighter literature of the day is flooded, he never named a book he had not read, nor a subject he did not understand. No doubt he was a little tiresome, but

what clever man is not? Dr. Johnson was, Carlyle was, Whewell was, Sedgwick was, Thirlwall was. You or I, gentle reader, may be tiresome, without their cleverness, their wit, or their originality.

‘Smith of Gumfreston’ was not as other men are, and I venture to think it is something to rescue his name from oblivion, ere we ourselves take our journey to ‘the place where all things are forgotten.’



## VII.

# A Great Yorkshire Vicar:

WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK, D.D.,

VICAR OF LEEDS AND DEAN OF CHICHESTER.

STEPHENS' life of Dr. Hook <sup>1</sup> is one of the best biographies I know. The great Yorkshire Vicar lives in its pages, talks with you in its conversations, and takes you into his confidence in its letters. In reading it, you feel him to be more than a mere acquaintance; but once to have met with him was a life-long memory. And yet his appearance, striking as it was, was not prepossessing. 'The boy Walter Farquhar Hook,' says an old acquaintance, 'might almost have been described as one of those on whom nature is said by the poet to have "tried her 'prentice hand."' True, she bestowed on him a strong constitution and an enormous chest, with a voice of wonderful power and endurance, but flexible and sweet

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Letters of Walter Farquhar Hook, D.D., F.R.S.*  
By his son-in-law, W. R. W. Stephens.

withal—a most important endowment for the future preacher. But of the gifts which charm the eye and find a ready way to the heart, she had been somewhat niggardly.’

When I first saw him he was in the prime of life, although his hair was turning grey; he was inclined to be stout, and promised to be stouter. When I last saw him his hair and whiskers were snowy white, and his features more decidedly marked.

He was, indeed, very fond of commenting on what he called ‘his ugliness,’ and after seeing the frontispiece to the *Life*, one can appreciate a story he used to tell of himself, how one day he noticed a little girl looking very earnestly up in his face.

‘Well, my dear, I don’t think you’ve seen me before.’

‘Oh yes, I have.’

‘Why, where?’

‘I saw you the other day climbing up a pole, and I gave you a bun.’ She had been taken to the Zoo.

Another little girl was told to go and kiss Dr. Hook. She hesitated, shrugged her shoulders, and exclaimed, ‘Tell mamma to go and kiss him first.’

His biographer more than once compares him with Dr. Johnson. ‘In his massive frame, and in some

respects in his features, especially in the low but bossy forehead, he resembled Samuel Johnson, and there were some other points of likeness between them : such as occasional twitchings and contortions of the face, fits of depression, a choleric temper, a constitutional dread of dying, and an antipathy to foreigners.' Of this last characteristic there are some amusing examples in his letters. 'I am too much of a John Bull to take any interest in Monsieurs and Madames and Mademoiselles. I suppose the heroine is a French woman' (he had been asked to read a French novel), 'and how could I take any interest in the adventures of a woman born and bred in that country where Buonaparte tyrannised, and that atheistical villain Voltaire spat his dirty venom at Shakespeare?' Certainly this was worthy of Sam Johnson ; but Hook was only twenty-four at the time the letter was written, within seven years of the battle of Waterloo. Even when I was a lad, English boys had not outlived the belief that one Englishman was a match for five Frenchmen. The national dislike was shared alike by those who abhorred Popery, and by those who feared the Encyclopædists. Moreover, the ignorance of each other's characteristics in which two nations divided only by a narrow slip of sea habitually lived, and the way they caricatured each other, may be seen in the prints of the day. Such absurdities are still reproduced in remote

places. On a rural stage a Frenchman looks like a dancing-master, an Englishman like Mr. Punch's John Bull.

Seven years later Hook's antipathies had not softened down. 'I am heartily sick,' he says, 'of Paris.' (It was during his honeymoon.) 'I hate France, and think Frenchman the most detestable of human beings. In three weeks I hope to be in dear old England, and never shall I wish again to leave its shores.' It is well Hook did not write *A Sentimental Journey*. He was just as emphatic in his Toryism, though in the course of time his intercourse with the working classes led him to modify his opinions—prejudices, one might call them.

His intense honesty could never be doubted, nor his willingness to follow his convictions. Thus, after he became Dean of Chichester, he wrote to Bishop Wilberforce :—

'I was to my misfortune born and bred a Tory. When I devoted myself to the manufacturing districts, my sympathies being easily excited, I became heart and soul a Radical. But I have been timid in declaring myself, not liking to offend old friends. Had I been a public character' (what was he else?), 'I should have swum down the stream from Toryism to Radicalism in a style easily understood by a good fat swimmer, who seems scarcely to disturb the water. They might have pelted me from the shore,

but I would have swum calmly on, and I should have shown how my principles of philanthropy were not changed but developed.'

I first heard him in the parish church of Hull, my native town. It was in the midst of the hurly-burly raised about his sermon before the Queen. It had run through twenty-eight editions, of which about one hundred thousand copies were sold. It was exposed for sale in the local shop windows, and people made a fuss about it that astonished no one more than Hook himself. Everybody was talking about it, and the most ridiculous stories—stories in every sense of the word—were being told; one was that he had been sent for into the presence, and rebuked by the young Queen with a sharpness more characteristic of Elizabeth Tudor than of Queen Victoria. These reports, however, must have been pretty widely spread, for Samuel Wilberforce writes in his journal, 'Heard that the Queen was very angry at it'; and he wrote to Hook himself, 'Is there any truth in the newspaper statements that you are no more to offend the ears of royalty with such plain reasoning? I suppose that it is quite impossible that this should be so.' Shrewd old Henry of Exeter (Phillpotts) wrote that he had at first heard 'that her Majesty had been displeased with the sermon, but he had since heard from a quarter which could hardly be misinformed, that this was not the case.'

In his *Reminiscences of Oriel* the Rev. T. Mozley says :—

‘The Queen is said to have been much pleased with the sermon. She might well be, for everybody listened to Hook with admiration, and even with pleasure, whether agreeing with him or not. The Queen’s advisers were not pleased.’

But perhaps the most ingenious quotation *à propos* of the supposed feeling at court was the following, sent to Hook by a friend :—

‘O thou Seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there : but prophesy not again any more at Beth-el : for it is the king’s chapel, and it is the king’s court (Amos vii. 12, 13).

Dean Hook’s appearance in Hull was a marked success. The huge church was crammed by an attentive congregation, who listened for upwards of an hour, my own impression being that it was only half the time. The way he read the lessons I never heard equalled. ‘His reading,’ says Mr. H. B. W. Churton, ‘was touching and effective, just because no effect was aimed at ; and it was commonly remarked that it was as good as a sermon, or a sermon of itself, to hear him read the lessons.’ An old woman was listening to him reading the twenty-sixth of St. Matthew, and never took her eyes off him during the whole seventy-five verses. But when he came to

‘Peter remembered the words which Jesus had said, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly,’ her pent-up feelings could restrain themselves no longer, and with a deep-drawn sigh she ejaculated ‘Ay, poor thing, and well he might.’ Every one has not the powers of Hook, but every one might, one would think, avoid the monotonous sing-song, or the dry, rasping tones with which the sublime vaticinations of the Prophets, the picturesque narratives of the Gospels, and the argumentative statements of the Epistles are too often slurred over with the same absence of feeling and perception.

There were other causes for excitement, for the Church was only just awaking out of the deep slumber that had fallen on her, and the State had passed through great political changes, and greater ones were impending. Those were the days of time-honoured abuses, when bishops were little seen or wished to be seen, when visitations were seldom made, and confirmations held once in seven years, when patronage was regarded chiefly as a means of enriching relations and dependants, and when the fortunate possessors of stalls and big benefices thanked God for their good luck. The stately prelate who presided over the province of York (Vernon Harcourt), and whose likeness may be discerned in Mr. Frith’s great picture, was thus spoken of by a country church-

warden who had been deputed by the vestry to a visit to Bishopthorpe. 'His Grace received us with the utmost urbanity, and we were asked to sit down to a famous dinner (luncheon), and we supped good ale out of silver mugs.'<sup>1</sup> Yet Hook himself speaks most warmly of his Grace's kindness and sympathy, when he first bore the brunt of the battle at Leeds, as a great help to him. He constantly consulted the Archbishop, who, as is well known, offered him a canon's stall at York.

The Reform Bill and the Test Act were but recent, and the clergy, for their opposition to both measures, were looked on as the opponents of progress, and the enemies of the people. The Radicals were of that extreme class described by Wordsworth, who could never mention a bishop, or a king from King David downwards, without some atrabilious prefix or other. Riots had been raised in different places; the palace of the Bishop of Bristol had been sacked. Cobbett and Ackland scattered their pamphlets broadcast over the country. The 'Black Book,' with the most

<sup>1</sup> Crabbe's Vicar fairly represented the Churchmanship of the day, though of course his poems had been written long before Hook's time —

'What is a Church? A flock, our vicar cries,  
Whom bishops govern, and whom priests advise,  
In which are various forms, and due degrees,  
The bench for honour and the stall for ease.  
Mine be that ease which after all his cares  
The peaceful praying prebendary shares.'



absurdly exaggerated statements on ecclesiastical revenues, was greedily read and discussed at socialist gatherings, and at political clubs, chiefly of working men.

The factory system had superseded the old hand-looms, and mills had been gutted and machinery destroyed. Cholera, fever, and famine had done their worst, almost unchecked, for the cottages were built on the banks of canals fœtid and poisonous with the refuse of dyeworks, and the sewage of mills, and sanitary regulations were entirely unknown. The Lord's Day was commonly spent—in the morning in sleeping off the Saturday night's debauch; and in the afternoon in dog-fighting, pigeon-flying, boxing-matches, and free fights.

There was a grievous lack of that sympathy between classes, which Judge Talfourd pronounced from the seat of judgment, just before his death, to be the great want of the age. It amazes one to reflect how such Acts as those for the regulation of mills and mines should have been opposed as they were, the Ten Hours Act especially, by Sir Robert Peel, Lord Melbourne, Mr. Cobden, and Mr. Bright; but then there were class interests to serve. The miserable procrastinations, and obstinate rejections of these beneficial measures from year to year, may be read in the *Life of Lord Shaftesbury*, and the ridicule he was exposed to in Greville's *Journal of the Reign*

of *Queen Victoria*, the 'Mr. Worldly-Wiseman' of his generation, as he has been called. 'We are just now,' Greville says, 'overrun with philanthropy, and God knows where it will stop or whither it will lead us!' But Shaftesbury and Hook fought bravely on, and on the same lines. Both were uncompromising advocates of the Ten Hours Act and of National Education; both worked against tremendous odds; both won the causes for which they strove.

'Let your laws,' says Shaftesbury, 'assume the proper function of laws, protect those for whom neither wealth nor station nor age has raised a bulwark against tyranny; but above all open your treasury, erect churches, send forth the ministers of religion, reverse the conduct of the Enemy of mankind, and sow wheat among the tares. All hopes are groundless, all legislation weak, all Conservatism nonsense without this alpha and omega of policy; it will give content instead of bitterness, engraft obedience on rebellion, raise purity from corruption, life from the dead.'<sup>1</sup>

These were exactly the ways Hook worked. He got up at four in the morning for his studies, and, as one who knew him well says, 'The vicar of Leeds would never have been so great a worker if he had not been a solid and patient thinker. The hours in which the light burnt in his study before the world

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Lord Shaftesbury*, vol. i. p. 346.

was up, had much to do with the fruitful activity of the busy day which followed.' He was always at his place in church, he was daily on his pastoral rounds, and he soon became as well known as the policeman on his beat. His indirect influence was so great that men rebuked each other for swearing, and boys ceased to ill-treat donkeys by the reminder, 'Doan't ye see t' ould Vicar.' He made himself acquainted with the merchants and manufacturers at their places of business, and rallied around him the shopkeepers and tradesmen. He saw the working classes at their homes after their day's work was over, and mixed with them at their club dinners, where, by the way, he always managed to keep them sober.

He threw himself heart and soul into every scheme for the benefit of his people, and that without any sacrifice of principle. But they did not understand him at first, and so he had to undergo the bullyings of Chartists and Socialists, whom he met with firmness and good humour, and managed in the end by his tact to turn into friends and supporters. He soon found that under the guise of seeming indifference there was a deep feeling of attachment to the Church. This showed itself in several old customs. On Mid-lent, or Mothering, Sunday the young men and maidens used to meet at home, and go to their Mother church, hence the name it bore. At Easter and Whitsuntide

they used to come from any distance to be married, or to have their children christened. So Hook availed himself of these time-honoured traditions for good, and tried to free them from the abuses that had gathered round them. His first great act after taking possession of his benefice was to build a church worthy of the place—a fabric which, although it may not satisfy the architectural tastes of the present day, has been cited by no less an authority than the late Mr. Beresford Hope as almost perfect in its arrangements for a dignified congregational worship, and as one in which three thousand people may both see and hear.

Then, although he did not himself know the difference between ‘God save the King’ and the Old Hundredth Psalm, he had the shrewdness to meet the popular taste for music by providing in his newly-built church the finest choral services known in the North of England. People, who do not know the West Ridingers, can have no idea of their passion for music. I once went to preach for a friend, who, by the way, tolerated the excess under protest. ‘Please, sir,’ said the clerk, ‘not to preach for more than a quarter of an hour, for our people, you see, come for the music.’ There were two choirs, and two anthems; one choir sat down to criticise the other. Service began at half-past six, but I did not get into the pulpit till the clock had struck eight, and all the time

I was preaching, the singers were consulting their music-books and their watches by turns.

A parson came from another part of the country to the neighbourhood of Leeds, and not noticing the stringing up of the fiddles, and the tuning up of other instruments, going on in the west gallery or singing-loft, stood up to read the *Venite*, on which the conductor or precentor, waving the bow of his violoncello, bawled out, 'Sit thee down, man; when it's thy turn, we'll tell thee.' Some one reminded Dr. Hook of the length of the service on Sunday morning. 'Pudding cold, Doctor, pudding cold.' Hook considered the objection a valid one.

Dr. Hook possessed another gift, without which he could never have got on in Yorkshire, and that was a sense of humour. Sydney Smith said that it needed a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotchman's head—an opinion in which no one who has read Dean Ramsay's *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* can possibly agree, and there is something akin in the grim Caledonian and West Riding humour. I was preaching one of a course of sermons in the open air in a non-churchgoing part of a town parish, when I was pleasantly struck by the polite attention of the landlord of a small public-house close by, who had placed a chair and table at my disposal for a temporary pulpit. So I remarked on it to one of my hearers. 'Why, you see,' said he, 'he reckons on

some of 'em dropping in for a glass when you've done.' A curate was trying to make a religious census of his flock, and asked a working man of what religion he was. 'Why, you may put me down as the religion of a wheelbarrow ; I goes whichever way they shoves me,' *i.e.* whichever way suited his interest. Another man, with a grin on his face, boasted of his regular attendance at church ; his comrades burst out laughing—the fellow had just left prison, where attendance at public worship was, of course, compulsory. But Yorkshiremen are civil after a fashion. One day I paid a visit to a handloom weaver busy throwing his shuttle, while his loom creaked and groaned so that I could not get a word in. So I asked him if he earned a penny in five minutes. 'No,' he said ; 'how should I ?' I then laid down a penny. 'Now,' I said, 'let us talk for five minutes.' The man stopped, looked at the clock. 'Five minutes is up,' he said at the end of the time ; 'but take back your penny ; your talk has been worth more than the "brass"' (money). 'You may look in again if you've a mind.'

Hook was roundly denounced at a vestry meeting as a High Churchman. I do not suppose that his opponent knew very much what a High Churchman was, but the Vicar let him go on unchecked, heaping epithet upon epithet on him as vicar and chairman. When he had done speaking, up jumped Hook.

‘Now,’ said he, ‘I am going to act upon a church principle, a high church principle, a very high church principle indeed.’ Every one was silent, wondering what on earth was coming next, when he crossed over to where his antagonist was sitting, and said, ‘I am going to forgive him,’ and put out his hand, which was earnestly taken, and both became fast friends. There is no better way of appeasing a Yorkshireman’s wrath than by a joke; but then it must be a good joke, and you must joke at the proper time, or it will be no joke for you. At a church meeting more seats were needed, so some extra benches were borrowed from a chapel hard by. ‘You see,’ said the vicar, ‘if the Dissenters won’t adopt our ceremonies, we don’t object to their forms.’ A parson’s gravity is sometimes not a little tried. I was once capping Yorkshire stories with Bishop Atlay, Hook’s successor. Our talk turned on the strange errands a clergyman is sometimes sent on. Said the Bishop, ‘Have you ever been sent for to shave a man?’ On my answering ‘No,’ ‘Then I have, and it happened this way. You know they never called me or Hook by our names; it was “t’ Vicar” or “t’ Doctor.” A damsel came with a message for me to go at once to her master, who was “very bad.” When I got there, I found I was expected to shave him. She had been told to go to a shop, kept by a man of the name of Vicars, or to Vicars’s; but she knew of no Vicar but

me. However, it gave me the opportunity of ministering to the sick man in another way.' Ah, I thought, 'So, my lord, you were sent for to *shave*, and you remained to *shrive*.'

Hook had a fine epigrammatic way of putting things. Here is what he said to an artisan, who talked to him of his surprise on seeing the light burning in the vicarage study, as he went to work, at five in the morning. 'Well, my lad, it takes a deal of courage to get up at all, and it only requires a little more to get up at four.'

Here are his directions about preaching. 'First state your case; then state your facts; then make out your case; then sum up. If your sermon is not in your opinion a good one, deliver it as if you thought it a good one.' He deprecated the impatience with which sermons are heard. 'If you have something to say, you must have time to say it. In these days men only measure sermons by minutes. "Mr. A. preached this morning, didn't he?" "Yes, a capital sermon; only nine minutes and a half." "Didn't Liddon preach in the evening?" "Oh yes, he preached fifty minutes and two seconds." Another of his dicta was, 'Preach to the many, but always try to bring in something for the few.'

How to manage a rector. 'Do your rector's work; but let him get the credit for it, and then you are sure to be good friends.'



Hook's means were never large, and they became less by degrees, owing to his surrender of revenues on his division of his parish, and to increasing family claims. Here is his simple estimate of the pleasures of greater abundance—

‘I really do not care for any luxuries, if I did not on principle deny them to myself, but I do confess that I like to have people to dine with me, and to give a poor man occasionally rather a large *tip*. It makes him so happy. I remember how I liked a tip at school, and so I cannot help thinking how pleasantly an unexpected half-crown must come into a poor man's hand; and I must confess that when walking with the children, if they want a toy, I have some difficulty in saying “No;” and I also confess that I do not like to say “No” to subscriptions. All very amiable confessions, like experiences told at a Methodistical class-meeting, but all proving that I am not by nature economical, and that my wife is quite right in saying that very often there is more religion in refusing than in subscribing.’

What is a Regular Brick? When Hook, as Dean of Chichester, was engaged in rebuilding the spire of his cathedral, he had made himself responsible for a considerable sum of money. The time for payment came, but he had no money in hand. So he bethought himself of his publisher, and asked him for an advance, on the credit of his *Lives of the Arch-*

*bishops* then in progress. This request was at once complied with, to which Hook wrote back: 'Dear B.,—I never knew before what a Regular Brick was. You are a Regular Brick.'

Hook, like many of us, formed a high estimate of public men, on the grounds, I suppose, of the *ignotum pro magnifico*.

In a letter to his friend, Lord Hatherley, then Sir W. P. Wood, he gives an account of an interview with Ranke the historian:—

'When I was in the Rolls House, Mr. Hardy told me that a German was in the next room collecting materials for a life of William III. He said Macaulay had only written the Life of William for the English. "No," said Mr. Hardy, "not for the *English*, but for the *Whigs*." The German was Ranke. I had thought of Ranke, the author of the *History of the Popes*, as an old classic. It never crossed my mind that he could be living and working. That work of his is one of the few of this age which will live for ever.

"Shall I ask him to step in here," said Mr. Hardy, "or will you call on him?" Of course I chose the latter alternative as the more respectful. I expected to see a gigantic German, a kind of knock-me-down author, when I was presented to a diminutive, untidy, good-natured, chatty, unpretending man, more like a Frenchman than a German. You know my bump of

reverence is strong for great men, and I bowed low, but he, being nearer the ground, bowed lower still. I mentioned my obligations to the *History of the Popes*' (Hook was writing his *Lives of the Archbishops*). "Ah," he said, "you will make use of me now that you are coming to my period. I am impatient to see the fifth volume; you will have to touch on Germany." At this proof of my fame being European, I raised my head, and could not lower it sufficiently to see my little friend until I sat down. I did sit down, and information oozed out of him from every pore.'

Besides his heavy parochial and literary work, his advice was so constantly asked that it entailed on him a most fatiguing amount of anxious correspondence. Once, at the beginning of Lent, a friend who had a sister in a Roman Catholic convent, told the Vicar that this nun had been bidden to abstain from writing any letters during Lent as a piece of penitential discipline. 'Dear me!' said Hook; 'I only wish there was somebody whom I was bound to obey, who would impose such a Lenten penance on me.' It would, no doubt, have been a wonderful relief to him.

His well-earned preferment did not come a day too soon, for time and hard work were telling on him. Necessary, however, as the change was, it was a great grief to him. He says in his Journal, 'This day

I bade farewell to dear, dear Leeds.' And his biographer writes : 'Next day, with many a tear, and many a "longing, lingering look behind," he tore himself away from the smoky town, with its forest of chimneys and its great grim piles of warehouses and mills ; not an endearing place to the stranger's eye, but full to him of tender memories ; dear to him as the scene of many hard-earned victories in the cause of the Church, and of education and social reform ; dear to him as the abode of loving and grateful hearts.

'And what a contrast between the Leeds, as he entered it in 1837, as he left it in 1859. He found it a stronghold of Dissent, he left it a stronghold of the Church ; he found it one parish, he left it many parishes ; he found it with fifteen churches, he left it with thirty-six ; he found it with three schools, he left it with thirty ; he found it with six parsonage-houses, he left it with twenty-nine.'

In the comparative seclusion of Chichester he resumed his originally studious and literary habits, broken in upon very early in his residence, however, by the rebuilding of the spire, and by invitations to preach, which his family, as a real question of self-preservation, compelled him, after a time, absolutely to refuse.

He was indebted for his deanery at Chichester to the Earl of Derby ; subsequently, but when he

was too old and infirm for change, Mr. Gladstone offered him the deaneries of St. Paul's and Canterbury. He felt the compliment, but declined the responsibility.

Opinions differ as to Hook's merits as a historian. Certainly his style is graphic, his portraits lifelike, and there is, ever and anon, 'a quaint conceit' about them which recalls old Thomas Fuller, so that in reading his *Lives of the Archbishops*, one must bear in mind what manner of man he was. You could not expect him to be quite impartial, any more than you could Dr. Johnson. But then, and unlike some modern historians, he was incapable of slurring over a fact, or of defending a character at the expense of truth. Besides which, he was far too outspoken to fear running counter to popular notions. Thus some of his readers, who were aware of his avowal that he intended to write as 'a Protestant of the Church of England,' must have rubbed their eyes when they came to his estimate of their favourite Cranmer.

'For what,' he says in a letter to his publisher, 'or in what cause was he (Cranmer) a martyr? Poor fellow, burning must be a terrible death, so we must not be severe upon him ; but never did a man ever tell such a heap of falsehoods, lie upon lie, as he did to *escape* martyrdom. He died at last, because, like the rest of us, he could not help it, but he lied like a

trooper to put off the inevitable hour as long as he could. He had sent others to death, because they disagreed with him in opinion, and his opinions were always changing. . . . But I really do not think he was so bad a man as Lord Macaulay, Mr. Pocock, and others make him out to have been. He was, I am convinced, a well-meaning, good-natured man, though the harm he did, through his want of fixed principle, his time-serving, his indolence, and his worldliness was great.'

Few historical parallels are better than the following comparison between Erasmus and Pole in a letter to Mr. E. A. Freeman :—

'There is something deeply interesting to my mind in reading contemporary letters. I had last year to make myself thoroughly acquainted with Erasmus. What a fine old fellow he was with all his faults! How charming are his letters! Very different are the letters of Pole. Erasmus was a man of genius, creating the language in which he wrote. It is Erasmean Latin. Pole, a good man, but not more than a man of talent, affects the Ciceronian style. You know that Erasmus says what he thinks. Pole, before writing, thought only of what a man in his situation ought to write, and then affected Ciceronian phrases. I was brought up by Dr. Gabell (at Winchester) to be an intense admirer, as I was at one time a great reader, of Cicero. So I read Pole with a

certain amount of pleasure. But if I met Erasmus, I should go up to him, shake hands with him, and make a joke. To Pole I should take off my hat, and say I felt much honoured by making his acquaintance; feel shy, and get away as fast as I could.'

Hook had devoted a good deal of time and study to early Church history, and was exceedingly well read in the annals of the English Church during the time of the Reformation, and subsequently. But the mediæval Church he had not studied with equal depth and care. All its better side (its poetry, its art, its philosophy, its protection of the weak against the strong), which had been fully appreciated by Guizot, by Michelet, by J. S. Mill, by Trench, by Voight, by Arnold, he had not learnt to grasp. Hence, for a full appreciation of such an archbishop as St. Anselm we must have recourse to Dean Church, and to Professor Freeman, rather than to the late Dean of Chichester.

Mr. Gladstone says of him :—

'He has left behind him monuments in literature which would have done honour to any clergyman, who had a hundred times the leisure of Dr. Hook. Hardly any one rises to eminence in the rank of historians without devoting his entire life to the task ; yet, first, in the merest fringes and scraps of his time, and then, in the calm of his closing years at Chichester, Dr. Hook contrived to write his *Lives of the Arch-*

*bishops of Canterbury*, which really almost means a history of the Church of England, and certainly, entitles him to take rank as an historian of much credit and merit, though not perhaps thought fit to enter into the first rank of historians. No student of the profoundly important period of the sixteenth century can possibly pass by his labour, and he will long be quoted as an authority on that critical and prolific time.’<sup>1</sup>

The Deanery of Chichester was just the preferment he liked, worn out and prematurely old as he felt himself to be. It brought together in a very remarkable way the beginning, and the close, of his ministry ; his curacy at Whippingham—the church, by the way, though since rebuilt, which the Queen attends—and his retirement at Chichester, whence he could gaze across the sea at the Isle of Wight, so full of his earliest recollections. As a very young man he had written from Oxford :—

‘My bowels yearn for our lovely island. To peace and quiet, to the parish that I love and the studies I delight in, to pursuits which are congenial to my soul, and to that retirement for which I am best adapted to divinity, to Shakespeare and the Muse, to green fields instead of dirty streets, to the calm of the country instead of the noise of the town, to the love of my simple flock instead of the heartlessness of the

<sup>1</sup> Lecture delivered at Hawarden.



world, I shall return with increased joy and redoubled zest, there to lay the deep foundations for future distinction in the vocation to which I am heart and soul devoted.'

And, indeed, the quiet of Whippingham was as needful for the development of Hook's character as the subsequent activities of Birmingham, Coventry, and Leeds. It helped him to attain that 'union of action and contemplation' which Bacon calls 'the perfection of human nature.' So to the near neighbourhood of Whippingham the good old man returned, though we are not told that he revisited it after he became Dean. Perhaps he only wished to bury dead memories, for he must long ago have outlived all personal recollections.

Those who were privileged to share his hospitality found him, though with a few harmless eccentricities, no shovel-pan-hatted dignitary, but as genial as when he was plain Vicar of Leeds. 'Ring for what you want,' he is reported to have said to Bishop Atlay, who had been his successor at Leeds, when a guest at the Deanery, 'and be thankful for what you can get.'

'I often think,' says the Rev. W. Appleyard, 'of my interview with Hook years and years ago, in a small private room with stone floor, and no carpets, and dark oak furniture; how he received me like a father, and listened to my story, and counselled

me, and then, before I left, instead of a shake of the hand, he bade me kneel (I was filled with wonder), and he pronounced his benison, and I came away trembling. I saw him again at Chichester, and reminded him of my first interview. He gasped out, for his breathing was very difficult, "May the blessing remain." Oh that we had more clergy of his stamp !'

After sixteen years of usefulness, and four after the death of his wife, a true help-meet, he was taken to his rest. There was something singularly touching and peaceful in his end. He had been accustomed to say that he did not fear death, but was afraid of dying. This pang was spared him.

His son writes :—

'He had been accustomed to give me his blessing after prayers, till towards the end, when he asked me to act more ministerially towards him. But on this evening he stopped me as I began, and, spreading out his hands, he pronounced the benediction over us. It was a moment of consciousness, and almost the last that he had. The whole of the last fourteen hours he was unconscious, and one may almost say that he passed away in sleep. So mercifully did our Heavenly Father have respect to the only weakness of the flesh that had given terror to the thought of death.'

In passing in review the life of this great Church-

man, one sees how much more than a mere ecclesiastic he was; in fact, that he was a many-sided as well as an extraordinary man. I do not think that his biographer exaggerates when he pronounces him to be at once an active parson, an eloquent preacher, a laborious student, a voluminous letter-writer, an able historian, a witty humorist, a wise practical moralist, an earnest Christian, an ardent patriot, and every inch of him a sturdy Englishman. Mr. Gladstone calls him a hero, and a hero he certainly was, if we accept that celebrated statesman's definition: 'One who pursues ends beyond himself — pursues them as a man, and not as a dreamer; not giving to some one idea an unruly weight to which it has no title, and balanced development, and forgetting everything else that belongs to the perfection and excellence of human nature.' His still more intimate friend, Lord Hatherley, says, 'There was in him a rare combination of genius in devising, and industry in carrying into effect, schemes for the full development of the Church; first in evangelising those large masses of our population, whose hearts so few had been able to reach, and then in building up their faith upon a firm foundation. For the one great characteristic of his course was in all things reality.' And as Mr. Gladstone concludes, 'his heroic sacrifice has earned him a secure and lofty place as a worn soldier in the annals of the bloodless warfare of the Gospel, and as a

benefactor in the fond recollection of tens of thousands of his countrymen.'

I cannot refrain from giving the following passage from one of Dr. Hook's earliest sermons at Chichester:—

'The Christian man will hear in the circumstances under which he is placed the voice of the Lord, saying, "In performing the duties of thy station, thou art performing the duties to which I call thee!" This it is which gives dignity to the humblest office. It matters not what our work may be—to sit on a throne, or kneel a petitioner before it; to repel the enemies of our country, or to conduct its affairs; to fight the battle, or to watch the staff; to command, or to obey; to manage an estate, or to cultivate a farm; to conduct a commercial firm, or to serve in the shop, or labour in the mill; to give the mind to a profession, or the hand to a trade; to plead as an advocate, or sit as a judge; to argue or to decide; to read or to write; to sweep a street, or to walk over it; to preach the Gospel or to hear it; to administer the sacraments, or to receive them—the single question relates to the principle upon which the action is done, and all actions, however insignificant in themselves, are raised to the same elevation when what is done is done simply because it is God's command, the marching orders of the Captain of our Salvation.'

Well may Mr. Gladstone add, 'That is the grand secret of Dr. Hook's life.'

NOTE.—I have been led into an amusing discussion as to the derivation of the word 'Brick' as applied to a person. Mr. Charles Mackay in the May *Blackwood*, on 'English Slang and French Argot,' says that 'Brick,' the highest encomium paid to a good fellow, is from *brigh*, spirit, energy, courage, and *brigheil*, magnanimous.

In Murray's 'New Dictionary,' "Brick," as applied to a person, signifies a genuine character, one made of good stuff; the image is suggested by the usefulness and hardness of the brick.' But Archdeacon Anson, Dr. Hook's son-in-law, reminds me that Aristotle speaks of the τετράγωνος ἀνευ ψόγου, the four-angled figure, *i.e.* cube, without blame or fault, *Anglicè*, a regular brick (*Ethics* i. 10-11).

My friend, Mr. N. A. Roch, tells me that Dr. Arnold gave the sixth form as an exercise to write a description of Oxford in the style of Herodotus. One of the boys tried to describe a cap and gown. Dr. Arnold suggested for the cap τετράγωνος, a word no doubt very familiar to him whose thoughts were always full of Thucydides and Aristotle.

## VIII.

# A Good Archdeacon:

JOHN ALLEN,

ARCHDEACON OF SALOP.

IF my readers have not yet seen Prebendary Grier's Memoir of Archdeacon Allen, I commend them to read it without delay.<sup>1</sup> Few biographies are better worth reading. It is lively and instructive, and brings its subject before you in a graphic and life-like manner. Moreover, the author adds to the interest of his book by giving his readers a speaking likeness. You see John Allen as he was in his best days, and as those who knew him like to recall him. Seated in his chair, you have before you a tall, broad-shouldered, large-limbed man, with a well-shaped head, piercing but kindly eyes, overhung with bushy eyebrows. There is an earnest look about him, but withal, tinged with humour. And you are hardly surprised to learn

<sup>1</sup> *John Allen, Vicar of Prees and Archdeacon of Salop.* A Memoir by his son-in-law, R. M. Grier, M.A., Prebendary of Lichfield.

that Thackeray, who was his friend at college, took him as the original of the chivalrous and simple-minded William Dobbin of *Vanity Fair*. There must have been good stuff in the man, who could reckon among his friends and acquaintances men so varied as Hallam, Tennyson, Archbishop Trench, Frederick Denison Maurice, Thackeray, Carlyle, and Gladstone. If one thing more could be desired for the Memoir, it would perhaps be to have had these personages brought more prominently forward on the stage, but that is easily accounted for by Archdean Allen's innate modesty.

John Allen came of a good Pembrokeshire family, and was one of six stalwart brothers, all but one of whom I knew, and who lived to do good in their day and generation. The survivor is the venerable Dean of St. David's, whose careful restoration of his cathedral, unique in its solitary grandeur, and once falling into ruins, is beyond all praise, and would satisfy the scruples of the most rigid antiquaries, even the *Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings*.

John Allen and his brothers were brought up at Burton Rectory in the old-fashioned way in which lads were reared in a past generation, and which helped to develop a true spirit of manliness in them.

Burton is a picturesque village lying on the sinuous line of Milford Haven. Although very remote, it is not without its historic interest. As in Pembroke-

shire generally, its church tower is Norman, and it must have been used for purposes of defence. Cromwell landed hard by on his way to besiege Pembroke Castle; and so did the French in the abortive invasion of 1797, when, as the country people tell, the invaders took flight on seeing a few Welsh-women in red cloaks on the cliffs, thinking them soldiers. Some prisoners of war were left in durance in a building now in ruins.

Allen was sent early to Westminster School, under a *régime* which preceded the era of Arnold, and when the same punishment was meted out to a lad for a false quantity as for a falsehood, and when bullying was the order of the day. I fancy that William Dobbin thrashing the big bully in defence of a small boy at Dr. Swishtail's Academy was a personal reminiscence. Who the small boy was we can only guess; who the chivalrous lad was there can be no doubt.

Boys get used to the trammels of school life as dogs get used to their collars. Yet Allen was not sorry to leave school, any more than Dr. Hook was, and to retire for a time to the quiet seclusion of Pembrokeshire, where for a few months he was placed under the charge of my old friend, the Rev. G. W. Birkett of St. Florence.

Birkett says of Allen: 'He was a lovable lad, but, like a good many young fellows, he fancied he



could do everything. One day he undertook to manage my bees, but they resented it as an intrusion, and he got well stung for his pains. Another time he must needs tap a beer-barrel. Down he went into the cellar and commenced operations, but with the result that the ale spurted into his face and eyes. Whereupon I said to him, "You see, Allen, there are some things you cannot do; you can't tap a beer-barrel, and you can't take honey."'

Allen says of Birkett, 'He taught me to love Barrow, and to see that there was a matter of interest in the differential calculus. He came to St. Florence to do the will of Him that sent him, not in a spirit of self-assertion, but taking cheerfully the lowest place. He was one of the holdfasts of society. All that came under his happy influence were, as I think, helped and stirred up to love, and to good works.' Birkett helped, too, to develop in Allen that chivalry towards women, for which master and scholar were both so noted. Their friendship subsisted during life, and Allen never came into Pembrokeshire without renewing his acquaintance with his old preceptor.

From Westminster Allen proceeded to Trinity College, Cambridge, on a scholarship. His rooms were up a double or treble flight of steps in the central tower, and over the west side of the great court, just one set of chambers removed from the chapel. Both doors were perforated, so as to give

entrance and egress to cats. Allen's had two openings, one large and one small, for the same alleged purpose. It was said of both Allen's and Thackeray's rooms that they had lodged Sir Isaac Newton; 'but I do not know,' says a friend, 'upon what authority, whether mere hearsay or an undergraduate's joke.'

Although a well-read man, and too conscientious not to use the opportunities the University afforded him, Allen was not what could be called a reading man. He was perhaps too desultory, and fond of seeing and receiving his friends. He was not a little interrupted by some of his intimates; of these Thackeray was apparently the chief offender. 'He would go into Allen's rooms, and sit there talking in a style with which the readers of *Pendennis* are familiar, by the hour, his pen and ink busy the while in producing all manner of humorous sketches.'

Those who had the privilege of visiting the Archdeacon at his vicarage at Prees, must often have seen those sketches.

But I am anticipating. Allen was ordained to the chaplaincy of King's College, London, soon after taking his degree. The Principal at that time was the Rev. Hugh James Rose, who, although a Cambridge divine, was certainly a morning star and harbinger of what is now known as the Oxford movement.

Two successive Principals became Allen's intimates, Bishops Otter and Lonsdale. It is interesting to look back into the past to find his colleague as examining chaplain to be the then Archdeacon Manning. Although strongly opposed to Romanism, it is pleasing to know that there was no breach of friendship between the two in later years.

Almost the same remarks apply to his friend Frederick Denison Maurice.

Amongst others he knew Maurice well, and loved him tenderly, though he was unable to follow him in all his speculations, and did not even understand all his views. (*Qy.* Who ever did?) In after years Maurice was a visitor at his country vicarage, and preached in his church.

'Maurice,' he says, 'was so unaffectedly humble, and so full of love for others, so unselfish, it was, indeed, a constant sermon of the most helpful kind to be in his company.'

Again, 'I never can understand any book that Mr. Maurice writes, but I am never in his company for ten minutes without feeling that I am a better man for it.'

Here is a characteristic story told by the late Dean Plumtre:—

'There was a certain pathos in John Allen's voice. He was resigning his mathematical lectureship on being appointed an Inspector of Schools, and was

saying good-bye to his pupils. "Well, gentlemen, I am sorry to say we shall no longer meet here, but I trust we shall meet in another place"—we all looked solemn, almost like St. Paul's hearers, and then he added after a pause—"I mean, gentlemen, in the divinity lecture-room." General sense of relief and satisfaction.'

Allen married almost as soon as he took holy orders. 'The marriage was a singularly happy one. Courteous to strangers, he was even more courteous, if possible, to those of his own household; chivalrous to all women, he was more chivalrous to his own wife than to any other.'

How one wishes those chivalrous notions could penetrate society, or what is called 'society.' What a difference it would make both in the way women regard men, and men regard women. It was women, he maintained, who made all the sacrifices in marriage. What do our matchmaking mammas think of that? 'A sister,' he wrote to his daughter, 'cannot be the same to a man as a thoroughly good wife. It is not good for man to be alone. For women, if they can make up their minds to it, it is, as I think, safer for them *not* to marry. For, unless the husband be perfection in all respects, trouble comes with double weight upon the wife. Whereas we men get everything we want by marriage—counsel, service, comfort.'

I do not think it would interest readers generally to follow Allen as a school inspector. I will therefore only quote two extracts from his letters. Writing of the School-Board system to Carlyle, he says: 'I do not judge Mr. Forster or Mr. Gladstone. Statesmen with nobler aims, have, as I think, never ruled this country. But in leaving out the Bible from the State education, a fatal mistake was, as I think, committed. I am persuaded that if every man and woman in England who could write their names were polled on this question, an enormous majority would be on the side of recognising Holy Scripture as the source of that knowledge which is of prime importance to man.'

The next extract is from a letter to his brother, the venerable Dean of St. David's, July 25, 1844. 'I have lately been spending a couple of days with John Keble. I reached the vicarage at Hursley, Saturday last, about 8.30 P.M. I had scarcely got out of the fly, when a man, rather above than below the middle size, with grey hair and some of his front teeth out, came to the door, and with a great deal of kindness and simplicity of manner, welcomed me to the house. The first impression reminded me somewhat of the plain exterior of Wordsworth. He ushered me into the dining-room, where his wife, her sister, and a Mrs. Moore, staying in the house, were just finishing their tea. Over the fireplace was the

engraving from Domenichino's picture of St. John, opposite, a real Wilson,—a very fine landscape,—with two pictures from German designs—Christ blessing little children (Overbeck), and St. John preaching in the wilderness, a drawing of the interior of Otterborne Church, a print of Judge Coleridge, Strange's engraving of Vandyke's three faces of Charles I. An engraving of Bishop Selwyn stood against some books. After tea we went into the drawing-room, where hung two engravings after Raffaele (the Transfiguration and the Marriage of St. Joseph); Belshazzar's Feast, by Martin; a large head of our Saviour after Guido, a head of Bishop Fox (prints), and one or two drawings of landscapes. In his study is Westmacott's marble bust of Newman, a copy in oils of Jeremy Taylor's portrait, prints of Archbishop Moore, the Duke of Wellington, and Lord Grenville. . . .

'At evening prayer every one stood while Mr. Keble read six or eight verses, then the sentences, "We are now come to the evening of another day," etc.; and then the servants, and all, knelt down, not at chairs, nor at a table, but without support. The next morning I had to walk and breakfast with one of the curates of a district church to see the Sunday school. I got back to church at Hursley. Mr. Keble's sermon was to the young people after confirmation, very scriptural, admirably arranged, and, as I thought, among the very best I ever heard; extremely simple.

In the afternoon Mr. Keble took me to his Sunday school, and first examined his boys in the Catechism, and afterwards asked me to take them in the Scripture, especially on the proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity. The evening was hot, and the room close, so we took them into the yard, under the shadow of some trees growing in the churchyard which adjoins the school.'

John Allen's own course seems to have been very much shaped after the same model, for once a month on a Sunday afternoon, he used to catechise the children of the parish, and he expected his own children to stand in the aisle, and answer questions with the rest. In the earlier years of his ministry, he held a night-school, in which he taught regularly three nights a week during the winter months; he also visited the day-school every day, and encouraged the children to write out what they could recollect of the Sunday sermons. He also taught his pupil-teachers, and gave instruction to the children by means of illustrations on the blackboard. He was always to the moment, and maintained that if a lady went to take a class, and was three minutes late, each minute would do more harm than everything else she taught would do good.

Some one told him of a clergyman who kept his congregation waiting. Allen remonstrated with him. 'It was only ten minutes,' apologised the parson.

‘How many people had you in church?’ inquired Allen. ‘About three hundred.’ ‘Three hundred? Well, then, you wasted three thousand minutes.’

To the moment he went out to visit his parishioners. He taught his cottagers thrift, amused them with penny readings and popular entertainments, and was, in fact, their friend and adviser. He might, indeed, be said to have formed his life and conversation on the models of Chaucer, George Herbert, and Cowper.

‘A genial hearth, a hospitable board,  
And a refined rusticity belong  
To the neat mansion, where, his flock among,  
The learned pastor dwells, their watchful lord;  
Though meek and patient as a sheathed sword.’

WORDSWORTH—*Eccles. Sonnet xviii.*

In these days of indiscriminate novel-reading it would be well if parents followed his example in personally selecting books to be read in his family. What he would have thought of the feminine fiction now in vogue, can only be guessed. But he deemed really good fiction a necessary part of a girl’s education. He mourned over the indifference with which Walter Scott’s novels are now treated. He looked on Thackeray as the best humorist and novelist of the day; but whilst freely admitting Dickens’s genius and humour, he never could forgive him for what he regarded as ‘making a mock of sin’ by introducing so much drunkenness into his novels.

Amongst other things he wished to get up a



crusade against the extravagance of ladies' dresses, but he must have been a sanguine man to imagine that the clergy, even archdeacons, could modify the fashions. Why, in the middle ages, as it is well-known, Popes issued bulls on the subject, and all in vain ; but what ecclesiastics could not do 'Mr. Punch' has done, to some extent, anyhow.

The parish wherein John Allen spent thirty-seven years of his simple, active life was Prees, near Shrewsbury. Its stately church tower may be seen by travellers on the London and North-Western Railway, for it lies 360 feet above the level of the sea. From the vicarage garden, and the windows overlooking the garden, may be seen the Long Mountain, the Breidden, Moel Famma, and Cader Idris. And this living he held with his archdeaconry. Never could a post of dignity and usefulness be offered in a more complimentary manner. His bishop and old friend Lonsdale wrote : 'I regard it as quite providential that your present position in Shropshire should have opened the way to your succession to the archdeaconry of Salop.' And again : 'That you will thus become an instrument of incalculable good in the diocese, if it please God to give you health, I am fully persuaded, and I shall have the satisfaction of thinking that I have done *one* good thing since I became Bishop of Lichfield.'

He entered on his duties, discharging his 'archi-

diaconal functions,' as Bishop Blomfield once put it, with all the energy, not to say impulsiveness, of his character. He rebuked the careless, encouraged the diligent, rooted out abuses, and, no doubt, made a few enemies, although small in proportion to his friends. For how could you help loving a somewhat hasty man, who always said what he thought, and thought what he said, who nevertheless apologised to you next day in writing for having said anything which, on reflection, he believed to be capable of wounding your feelings. But pugnacious he undoubtedly was, as the broadsides he and his brother archdeacon, George Anthony Denison, discharged against each other showed. 'Keep these two men apart,' said Dean Bowers at the Manchester Church Congress, anticipating a theological duel. But how they really loved each other may be gathered from what Archdeacon Denison wrote to Allen's son after his father's death.

'Among all—I thank God I may say many—friends, I know of no memory more dear to my heart upon every ground, whether of difference or concurrence, than that of your dear father. He won all men's reverence as he did all men's love.

'I remember well the visit here. It was full of comfort to me, and to my dear wife. I put your gift into my drawer of memories of the many dearly-loved ones gone before me, and live in hope of the blessed-

ness which shall make us of one company again when there is nothing but the unity of the love that endureth for ever.

My intercourse with Archdeacon Allen was chiefly during his annual visits to his brother Charles, at that time my most influential parishioner at Tenby. He used to go to the cricket-field to watch athletic sports and tennis matches, and to the balls and garden and other parties. One morning I was walking down the High Street when he joined me, and I noticed the gossips staring at us. 'What are they looking at?' he innocently inquired. I thought it must be the stalwart dignitary,—he thought it must be me. 'Ah,' he said, 'it's that hat of yours.' I had invested in a new one with a broadish brim. 'No,' I replied; 'it's your hat, not mine.' Then it occurred to him that he had got it on the wrong side about, with the rose at the back. By the way, I saw the learned Dean Peacock walking on the esplanade at St. Leonard's on Sea in like guise.

Allen and I strolled on. 'I have not been on these sands,' I said, 'for three years.' They were at the time crowded with visitors. 'I'm sorry to hear it,' was the reply, 'because I am afraid it shows that you do not mix with your people in their lighter pursuits.'

An orator he certainly was not, but his sermons were plain, pointed, and clothed in English worthy

of Charles Kingsley or Bishop Ryle. He preached for the Zanzibar Mission at Tenby Church. His sermon lasted just fourteen minutes, but he got the largest collection we had had for many years. One touch of nature did it. It was when, with faltering voice, he said, 'And my dear daughter has given herself to the work.'

His contributions to literature, though not strictly entitling him to be regarded as a man of letters, were characteristic of him. Besides charges and letters, they included a biography of William Law the Nonjuror, author of the *Serious Call*, a man whose name has come a good deal to the fore of late; a short life of John Bunyan as a preface to a new edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; the *Legend of St. Christopher*; an issue of Albert Dürer's prints, which he called *The Gospel of the Unlearned*; and an alphabetical penny hymn-book, the first of its kind.

But I must give two late recollections of him, one in the words of his biographer, one in my own.

'It is but seldom that four brothers (aged eighty-one, seventy-eight, seventy-two, seventy) can meet, full of years and honours, close to the spot from which they started on life's journey, to look back together upon so great a stretch of time, chequered by so few disappointments, and bright with so many blessings. But if they were near the starting-point, they were also near the goal of their careers. Around them lay

the familiar haunts of childhood, and close at hand were the mansions of their Father's house. The waves which, if the windows were open, might be heard beating against the shore, not far from where they sat, would remind them of the narrow boundary between the Seen and the Unseen; and they must have felt the nearing of that eternity, of which the pure delights of home, and warm family affection, and the splendour of the sea, and all the fair beauty of the earth and sky are at once the earnest and the type. Since then three have crossed the line. Only one now remains behind.'

My last interview with Archdeacon Allen was in the Master's Lodge in the quaint old hospital of St. John at Lichfield, whither he had retired on resigning Prees. It was just the place for him, quiet and secluded, looking on to a green lawn, and within hearing of the cathedral chimes. The rooms were panelled, and he pointed out that, owing to what one might have deemed an unreasonable dread of burglars, his predecessor had had the doors and shutters lined with iron.

I had gone to Lichfield from Birmingham for a choral festival, and was asked to luncheon. I do not know how it came about in the course of conversation, but I told him of a visit I was going to pay Cardinal Newman, and I showed him an autograph letter I had received, written in his usual clear and legible hand. 'Such a letter,' said Allen,

'will soon possess a historical value'; and then, in return, he showed me a copy of one he had received from Newman. 'Ah,' he observed, 'I have not got the original; I sold it to Thompson, the Master of Trinity. I asked him what he would give me for it, and he said, "All I've got in my pocket"; which turned out to be three pounds eighteen shillings and no pence. So I begged to take a copy of it, which one of my daughters did for me, and I sent the money out to Zanzibar.'

The next day I told the story to Cardinal Newman. 'Ah,' he said, 'Allen's a good man, a good man! But what did you say? Dr. Thompson gave three pounds eighteen shillings for a letter of mine? You amaze me!'

Allen had said 'I should like, when I am quite worn out, to die under the shadow of a cathedral'; and that wish was gratified. Moreover, he was spared the peevishness and loss of memory which so often accompanies age. He looked affectionately after the old people in the hospital, and gained their love in return—

'Virtuous and wise he was, but not severe:

He still remembered that he once was young.'

For five months before his death, he never left his bedroom. 'To every tale of sorrow, to every story of earnest work for God, the sufferer would attend with the deepest interest, showing his sympathy with the

narrator by his expressive countenance, or by pressure of the hand.'

'On one occasion, when Bishop Abraham had prayed with him, the Archdeacon took off the cap he wore, and bent forward his head. The Bishop could not for a moment understand what he wanted, and the sick man whispered,—for speech was becoming a difficulty to him,—“Give me thy blessing, friend.” Thus, as the Bishop added, “the greater was blessed of the less.”’ And so on to the end, when, laid in the robes he had not worn for nine months, with the cross on his breast, and his Prayer-Book opened at his favourite psalm by his side, after an early communion in the chapel of St. John’s, he was carried by loving friends to his rest. As Prebendary Grier beautifully says, ‘John Allen had ceased to be *oculus*, but he was still *cor episcopi*.’

‘A better preest I trow that nowhere none is.  
He waited after no pompe ne reverence,  
He maked him no spiced conscience,  
But Cristes love and His apostles twelve  
He taught, but first he followed it himselve.’

CHAUCER’S *Canterbury Tales*—Prologue.

## IX.

# A Great Hymnologist:

JOHN MASON NEALE, D.D.,

FOUNDER OF ST. MARGARET'S, EAST GRINSTEAD.

IN recalling the memory of this great scholar and noted divine and hymnologist, I wish it to be understood that I am drawing on my own recollections, as well as on those of mutual friends. I am also indebted to the interesting memoir placed in my hands by the Sister who edits *St. Margaret's Magazine*, and to an obituary notice by a brother poet and hymnologist, the Rev. Gerald Moultrie.<sup>1</sup> No one, indeed, could know Dr. Neale by mere hearsay. To know him you must have seen him at East Grinstead, as to know Keble you must have seen him at Hursley. The two were much alike in their reserve, and dislike of notoriety. But Neale was at times so abstracted and absorbed, that it was no easy matter to draw him out. Stories are told of people who made pilgrimages to the picturesque and quaint old College, to interview him, as the Yankees say, and who went back with

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from the *Churchman's Companion*, 1866. Signed G. M.



hardly the interchange of a word. But when visitors properly accredited came, they found him a man of infinite resources.

‘Hither came scholars and the letters of scholars, from far and near, Oxford and Cambridge, London and Dublin, Russia and America, propounding knotty points for elucidation in theology, politics, hymnology, liturgiology, canon law, and history. And the Warden, master of some twenty languages, and of an immense mass of varied learning, the first liturgical scholar of his day, and endowed with foresight amounting (as subsequent events have proved) almost to prophecy, writes there standing behind his desk, shy, retiring, assuming nothing but his own inadequacy to instruct, and yet ready with a satisfactory answer to almost every question. Besides replies to these individual applications, his unresisting pen pours forth work upon work with marvellous rapidity, learning, and versatility, church history, theological essays, children’s hymns and stories and catechisings, newspaper articles, Seatonian prize poems, translations into or out of Greek and Latin, pamphlets on questions of the day, Scripture commentaries, and historical tales, biographies, cantilenæ in dog-Latin, travels, and sermons. And Sackville College was itself no unsuitable home for such a man. Quiet, withdrawn from the stir and bustle of ordinary life, it was well fitted for the abode of a scholar. . . . As he laboured

for his College and in its little chapel, so much more did he labour for England and its Church, not rightly appreciated at the time. But over his study door was the inscription, "Through evil report and good report," and over his mantelpiece, "*Per angusta ad augusta.*"

Really to know what manner of man he was, he had to be seen greeting the aged inmates, and speaking to them in their chapel those inimitable addresses afterwards known as *Readings for the Aged*; or in the convent, where he ruled the Sisters by gentle and yet wise and firm discipline; or in St. Agnes' School, where he varied his religious teaching with stories from history, and tales of Christian heroism; or in the orphanage, where the little ones clustered around their 'dear Father,' as they always called him. In the very Oratory itself he used to have a child on each side of him, putting up its tiny hands to touch his, or to finger his robes. Of no one could Goldsmith's lines be more truly said—

'E'en children followed with endearing wile,  
And pluck'd his gown to share the good man's smile.'

His love of animals was quite as marked. Not a boy would beat a donkey, or throw a stone at a dog, if he were suspected to be near. One day some urchins were belabouring a donkey, when, just as they turned the corner, there was Dr. Neale. 'Dear boys,' said he, 'do you know who used to ride on an ass?' 'Yes, sir,' replied the boys, plucking

their forelocks ; ‘ Jesus Christ. ‘ Well, then, think of that, and let it keep you from being cruel ; and see there—ah ! it is nearly worn away by this collar—He marked the ass with His cross ’—alluding to its mane. ‘ Now, promise me, my laddies, that you’ll never ill-treat your donkey again.’ The boys kept their word, and the good Warden never passed them without a kind word, or a penny. Sometimes he walked by the cart, with his hand on the animal’s shoulder, and sometimes he used to call to drivers, as they passed the College Green, to stop, that he might give their asses carrots. The Cheshire farmers will never forget their finding him, when on a visit to Tarporley Rectory during the cattle plague, on his knees in the cow-houses praying for the suffering animals.<sup>1</sup> After this, they regularly sent for him to do so.

He was one of the most generous men that ever lived, and, like Dr. Hook, could never keep a penny in his pocket. His good wife tried to teach him common prudence by giving him a certain sum to expend every day ; but it was quite useless. He gave to all who asked, and was very often beset by beggars who knew his habits, and who way-laid him as he walked from the College to the Convent. I was walking with him to the railway station when a beggar accosted him, on whom he bestowed the only

<sup>1</sup> On this occasion he wrote his hymn, ‘ All creation groans and travails.’

coin he had with him, a shilling to pay his fare with. The stationmaster guessed what had happened, and handed him his ticket with a smile. I expostulated: 'Neale, I'm sure that fellow is an impostor.' 'That rests with God,' was all he said in reply.

He took the precept literally, 'Give to him that asketh of thee, and never turn thy face from any poor man.' Neither Mrs. Neale nor his servants were at liberty to break through the rule of giving, if only a penny or a slice of bread, to every applicant. Certainly he had no faith in 'political economy.'

'His charity knew no distinction of creeds. There were always some poor people invited, out of the town, to the Sunday dinners, until there were inmates enough in the College to fill up the tables. Their only claim to admission was their poverty. It was never asked whether they went to Little Bethel or the parish church. Aged, sick, infirm, Churchmen or Dissenters, all found a welcome at his board, and sympathy from that loving heart.'

'Amongst the earliest recipients of his aid was an Independent minister in declining health, who was said to have been worried out of six of his seven senses by his people, because mentally he was too independent—a condition of mind which is not approved of by the Independents. He seems to have been a man of high and elevated character. He was often visited by Dr. Neale, and on leaving East

Grinstead, one of Dr. Neale's relations, at his request, supplied him with delicacies for his fading and consumptive body, and with books and cheerful attention to smooth his pathway to the tomb. Another Dissenting minister—a Presbyterian—became a warm admirer of Dr. Neale. He used to resort to Dr. Neale for the loan of books, and for conversation on topics of interest. He was taken ill, and experienced the hospitality of the College. This man had the courage to stand forth as a defender of Dr. Neale in a Dissenting paper in 1857 (a time of great excitement), when he ably reviewed Dr. Neale's works.'

That Dr. Neale was slovenly in his personal appearance, and that when a new suit of clothes became an absolute necessity, they had to be placed on a chair for him to put on, unwitting of their novelty, most of his intimates were aware.

His friend, Gerald Moultrie, says: 'He was singularly careless of his own personal comfort, going about without umbrella, and in his thin cassock, in all weathers. Last winter (his last), however, to the great surprise of the sisterhood, he came out with a pair of overshoes to walk down to the new buildings in. It was his favourite walk, as it was the dear wish of his life to see his beloved Sisters and orphans comfortably housed—a wish, alas! not destined to be accomplished. He said that his feet were often wet through three times a day. This seemed quite

sufficient reason, but it quietly transpired that the chief thing in his mind was that it gave the servants so much trouble.'

How he got through so much literary work was a mystery to people who did not know his ways, and the little time he took for rest. Who that was ever inside it will forget that wonderful library, his book-room, as he called it? It was quaint in its architecture and quaint in its fittings, piled up from floor to roof with folios, quartos, octavos, in all kinds of bindings and all kind of languages, and strewn with pamphlets, papers, and manuscripts, 'in sweet confusion blended.' Here, in this study of his, the learned Warden sat, or rather stood, at his desk, or walked up and down, dictating to the Sister who acted as his amanuensis, whom he had taught to write in Greek and German, and also, I think, in Hebrew and Syriac characters. His habit of walking up and down while he thought, and dictated his thoughts, was inveterate. As I sat in the library reading the *Guardian*, he came to a standstill, and began biting his nails, a way he had when he was puzzled. The amanuensis looked up from her work. Then it turned out that I had put my chair in the way of his course across the room. I removed it, after which profuse were the Doctor's thanks; he instantly resumed his perambulations and his dictation without impediment. Here he read on, whilst the

peacocks were uttering their sharp screams under his window, looking out for bits of bread to be thrown to them. Here, too, long after the aged pensioners were snoring in their dormitories, he remained till he took his nightly rounds in the quadrangle before retiring for some four hours' sleep. He used to take his friends out to hear the inmates snore. I shall not forget the sounds. But it was when he could be coaxed away from his beloved books that you saw him at his best. Then, if you knew how to draw him out,—not always easy,—you found him a most genial companion; he would sit up with you to the 'sma' hours,' telling endless stories and legends, diving into old books and manuscripts, giving you bits of classical, ecclesiastical, or ecclesiological lore, and, if the truth must be told, setting your hair on end by ghost stories, in which he firmly believed. My friend, H. Nihill, once sat up with him till two o'clock in the morning, when they parted to go to their bedrooms; but no sooner had the guest fallen into his first sleep, than he was awakened by the sound of footsteps approaching, and a dim light drawing nearer and nearer. The door opened, and an apparition was seen, none other than Dr. Neale in his cassock, and a lantern in his hand. He had clean forgotten that he had given up his own bedroom to his friend, and taken another. Of course the absent-minded host was profuse in his apologies, but I

believe that he enjoyed his friend's discomfiture. 'I'm afraid,' said he, 'you took me for a ghost.' 'To tell you the truth, I did,' was the reply. But no sooner was the nocturnal visitor's back turned than the guest got out of bed and firmly bolted his door. Dr. Neale and the late Bishop Wilberforce have been known to sit up the night through telling each other stories of the supernatural. One or two of these are extant. My intimacy with Dr. Neale began by my placing one of my then little daughters at St. Agnes' School, under the Sisters. At that time he looked very much like his portraits. He was a tall, angular, rather loosely-limbed man, dressed in the old-fashioned way that Pusey, and Keble, and Isaac Williams used to dress, in swallow-tailed coats, tall hats, and white ties.

He was sallow in complexion, with dark and not very tidily brushed hair, short-sighted, wore spectacles, and had a distraught and dreamy look, as though his thoughts were far away. His head was intellectual, and when a smile crossed his somewhat melancholic aspect, it animated his entire features, like a sunbeam on a winter's day. Within the College precincts, and at the Sisterhood, he always dressed in his cassock, with a trencher cap on his head, and a pair of bands under his chin. Amongst his many accomplishments was that of Latin writing. I once put him to the test by dictating a paragraph out of the *Times* newspaper; he rendered it into that learned tongue as readily as a



schoolboy would pen a dictation lesson. He used to use up odds and ends of time, when waiting for a train, thereby sometimes missing it, or when awaiting the arrival of a hostess, by noting down on backs of envelopes, or bits of waste paper, any thought that occurred to him. This came out in rather a notable way on a visit he paid to Hursley, whither he had been invited by Mr. Keble with the Bishop of Salisbury to help them with a new hymnal. Mr. Keble used to be fond of telling the story, but I had it from Dr. Neale himself. As told me, Neale arrived a few minutes before his host, who was busy in his parish. On his return, Dr. Neale said, 'Why, Keble, I thought you told me that the *Christian Year* was entirely original?' 'Yes,' he answered, 'it certainly is.' 'Then how comes this?' And Dr. Neale placed before him the Latin of one of Keble's hymns for a Saint's Day (St. Luke's). Keble was utterly confounded. There was the English, which he knew that he had made, and there too, no less certainly, was the Latin, with far too unpleasant a resemblance to his own to be fortuitous. He protested that he had never seen this original, no, not in all his life, etc. etc. After a few minutes more, Neale relieved him by owning that he had just turned it into Latin in his absence.

But preoccupation of mind has its drawbacks, as I found to my cost, for when Dr. Neale was due to

preach for me at an octave of services I was holding in Manchester, the intending preacher took a ticket to Liverpool, and found himself there instead. Fortunately I had an excellent substitute in the late eloquent Provost Fortescue, but the disappointment of the congregation, who had assembled to hear the divine to whom the Church of England is indebted for *Jerusalem the Golden*, was indescribable.

The reaction in favour of the great work to which Dr. Neale devoted his life, that of Sisterhoods, is one of the most notable facts in the modern history of the Church of England. Some of us can call to mind the obloquy cast on Dr. Pusey and Miss Sellon, the howlings and hootings with which their names were assailed at Protestant meetings, the 'evil surmisings' which imputed the worst motives to them. Perhaps the persecution which Dr. Neale underwent was all the more intense, because he was looked upon as a renegade from the Evangelicalism in which he had been brought up. He and the Sisters were pelted with stones and mud at Lewes, mobbed at Brighton, and burnt in effigy somewhere else. For twelve years, owing to misrepresentations, subsequently retracted, his bishop refused to license him. Neale's revenge was to dedicate to his lordship his volume of 'Seatonian Prize Poems.' The bishop lived to regret this act of authority, and to withdraw his inhibition. It might indeed be said of Neale what was said of

Cranmer—‘To do him an act of injury was the way to reap a benefit from him.’ One day a country parson was travelling on the Brighton line, and had got to Three Bridges Junction, where the train stopped. Here was a sight on which he gazed with feelings indescribable. Could he indeed believe his eyes? Was he really in Protestant England? Was he really living in the middle of this enlightened nineteenth century? Could it be true? Why, there, *there* on the platform was a group of nuns in habits and veils, and all the paraphernalia of the Popery of the ‘dark ages.’ But what were they about? Some were carrying baskets, and some were leading tiny children by the hand. And the guards, and station-master, and porters, were smiling a welcome, and helping the party into carriages reserved for them, with that readiness, and good-nature, and disregard of trouble which these officials—most of them, I daresay, husbands and fathers—show on school pleasure trips, and with many tokens of respect for the Sisters. The journey had passed cheerily enough, for up to that moment he had been engaged in the delightful occupation of cutting open and perusing his *Record* newspaper, damp and fresh from the press. As it happened, too, he had just finished a philippic against Sisterhoods in general, and East Grinstead in particular, and Dr. Neale as the *fons et origo mali*. Could these be the very Sisters? Yes! it was the

junction for East Grinstead, and there they were as large as life, and the worst of it was, both Sisters and children looked provokingly happy—about the very ring of their laughter there could be no doubt. So that, whatever their secret penances, whatever their deeds of darkness, they *looked* like ‘children of the light.’ The Sisters had no ‘Witch of Endor’ look about them, they were not ‘weird sisters,’ and the faces of their little charges were radiant with smiles. But for his Protestantism the good man would have smiled too ; then just before the guard sounded his whistle, a porter approached the door out of which this passenger was leaning head and shoulders. ‘By your leave, sir,’ and in was pushed an absent-looking gentleman, quite out of breath, and barely in time to save the train. ‘All right this time, sir,’ said the guard, with a respectful salute, as he put the whistle to his mouth ; ‘but if I might *advise*’ (with great emphasis on the word *advise*), ‘if I was *you*, sir, I’d not cut it quite so close.’ The train moved on, and the two sat down opposite to each other. ‘An extraordinary sight that, sir, and extraordinary times these we live in,’ said the first occupant of the carriage, expecting to find a sympathising listener. His companion hardly knew what to say, and thought silence the best policy. So the old clergyman said, thinking he had not been heard, and raising his voice, ‘Are those really the so-called Sisters under the notorious

Dr. Neale?’ What the reply would have been I do not know, for just at this moment peals of laughter were heard from the next compartment, and shortly after this, the train stopped, and out trooped the Sisters and the children. ‘Please to allow me to pass, sir,’ said the other gentleman, who was, I need not say, Dr. Neale. But this, of course, his companion was not aware of. So when he was left alone, he called up a guard. ‘Who is that clergyman that just got out?’ ‘Why, I thought, sir, every one on this line knew him. Why, that’s Dr. Neale, and those ladies are the Sisters, and the children are the orphans.’ ‘They look very happy,’ said the old parson. ‘They’d need to be, sir,’ was the reply. But here the whistle sounded again, and the good man was left to his reflections and his *Record*. But somehow or other he did not feel very comfortable for having spoken of a brother clergyman to his face as ‘notorious.’ He did not like having done so, for he was a Trinity man, and Dr. Neale was a Trinity man; and, as every one knows, Trinity men are somewhat punctilious. So he wrote to Dr. Neale to recall the expression, and Dr. Neale wrote back an amusing letter, with a Latin pun on the word in it. I do not know whether the two exchanged anything more than correspondence, but I daresay one of them came to see that even a partisan newspaper is not always infallible. I happened to be a guest at the

College just about the time when the work of the Sisterhood was beginning to tell, and when a reaction in favour of its founder was setting in. It was the 5th of November, and Sussex was then notorious for the display of its Protestantism, and for the zeal with which this great Protestant festival used to be kept up. Well, on the College Green, and throwing a lurid light on the quaint old buildings, bonfires were lit, tar barrels set on fire, and squibs let off, and thither frequented the whole populace of East Grinstead. The St. Agnes girls had coaxed Dr. Neale to let them go to see the fireworks, and I volunteered to head them up from the school to the College. So I marshalled them in due order, when in rather a lonely part of the road we encountered a lot of young fellows letting off crackers. I rather hesitated what to do with my little group, but I had no cause for alarm, for no sooner were we recognised than the word passed from mouth to mouth, 'The Sisters! the Sisters!' and then the youths and hobbledehoys stood aside respectfully to let the procession pass, and not a squib was fired till we were far out of gunshot. When we arrived at the College Green, several men had made 'Guys' of themselves in various guises, and amongst them I discerned a man grotesquely got up in a sack, out of which the end had been cut, pulled over his head and shoulders, surmounted by a queer-shaped head-dress not unlike an

Eastern turban. The man was walking solemnly about with his hands clasped, whilst the lads and lasses seemed to be on the broad grin. I asked what it meant, at which the rowdies grinned all the more. Then I found the 'Guy' was a take-off of a Greek archimandrite, who had been on a visit to the Warden the week before. So I said to the wearer of the strange vestments, 'I'm afraid that's hardly kind to a stranger, and I'm sure you would not wish to offend the good Doctor.' 'Eh dear!' replied the man, 'but I never thought of that'; and in a minute he went away, and divested himself of his disguise. When I told Dr. Neale, he said that a very few years before it would have been at the peril of their lives for him or the Sisters to have been out in the crowd on Guy Fawkes' Day.

A little later on, one of the Sisters was travelling in a third-class carriage to Tenby, when, on this side of Cardiff, two 'lewd fellows of the baser sort' got in, and made some slighting remarks on the Sister's dress, meanwhile staring her rather impudently in the face. But this roused a sailor at the farther end of the carriage, and over the divisions and seats he strode, and with upraised fist he thus addressed the men—

'Now, my hearties, just you hold your din, and keep your tongues within your jaws; for, by the Lord Harry, if you affront this lady, I'll give you

both such a milling that your mothers that bore you won't know you. That lady's a Sister, and when I was down with fever at Cardiff, one of 'em, if it was not her, nursed me through it as if I had been a babby' (baby).

The two men got out at the next station, and the Sister entered into conversation with the sailor, who, it is needless to say, showed her every politeness. She was thankful, however, that there was no occasion for the display of her protector's prowess.

As I have already hinted, Dr. Neale was originally brought up as the Wilberforces and other noted High Churchmen were, as a strict Evangelical. But it was by the best representatives of the school. His father, the Rev. Cornelius Neale, like the Rev. Henry Martin, took the highest university honours; he was Senior Wrangler, first Smith's prizeman, and Chancellor's medallist. His mother was daughter of Dr. John Mason Good, after whom he was named, an able physician, an accomplished linguist and versifier. So that, like other clever men, Dr. Neale inherited great abilities, as well as the traditions of a party which, at that time, numbered many noted men, and was distinguished for much earnestness and piety.

One curious circumstance was his invincible dislike to mathematics. This dislike, says a friend, 'proved disastrous to his hopes of graduating with distinction, for the iron rule which compelled all candidates for the



Classical Tripos to take mathematical honours first, resulted in his being unable to secure the prize, which was universally adjudged to him by those who knew his powers.' He was confessedly the first classic of his year. At Cambridge he was a pupil of the renowned Richard Shilleto.

Shilleto, like Bishops Lee and Lightfoot, and other great Cambridge scholars, seemed to have the faculty of making his interviews with his pupils pleasant. 'I could sit,' Neale says, 'with Shilleto from morning till night.' It is impossible to conceive anything of the sort more delightful. A proof of the veneration in which he held the great Evangelical leader, the Rev. Charles Simeon, may be gathered from the fact that, at Cambridge, he attended his meetings long after his own principles were being developed in a directly Church line.

Speaking of Simeon's death, he says in a letter: 'When I came in, I heard that Mr. Simeon was gone. He died at two minutes past two, and I, as you may easily conceive, have thought of little else all day since. I have not yet heard any particulars. So the day he has been preparing for for fifty-six years has come at last. Oh, what a meeting he and Henry Martin must have had! All the pleasure of thinking of that would be taken away by that horrible thought that friends will not know each other in another world. I cannot think how any one can believe it.

Poor Mr. Simeon ! I cannot tell you how much I am grieved for his loss. I should think there was a great deal of sorrow to-night in Cambridge. I was going to say, What a glorious night for him ! but there is no night there.'

As to Neale's Cambridge life, one of his biographers writes : ' Riding, boating, athletic games had no charm for this young collegian. Books were his passion ; he read at meals, he read walking, he read driving, and what he read he forgot not. He now and always read everything that came to hand, but took special delight in poetry, biography, and history. His life was not altogether sedentary. Long country walks with a book or a friend were delightful to him, and he had already thrown himself enthusiastically into the study since called ecclesiology, but which was then in a nameless and embryo state. 'The ecclesiastical buildings, scattered over the country in various stages of neglect and decay, had for him an irresistible fascination, and his greatest delight lay in making expeditions to the neighbouring villages, and noting all the peculiarities of these old churches. And while he was thus unconsciously preparing to become a great ecclesiastical antiquarian, likewise he was beginning those other studies of patristic and mediæval literature in which also he was to rise to so great excellence.'

His greatest work at Cambridge was in connection

with the Cambridge Camden, afterwards called the Ecclesiological, Society.

A writer in the *Saturday Review* of December 12, 1885,<sup>1</sup> says: 'It was a bold enterprise on the part of two undergraduates of Trinity College, Cambridge,—John Mason Neale, in his third year, and Benjamin Webb, a freshman,—to undertake, at the far-off date of 1839, to reconstruct the visible worship and church architecture of England. Confessedly their movement was an offshoot of what was still literally Tractarianism at Oxford, for the tracts were still continuing to come out; but they took up the revival at the point at which the Oxford leaders left it weakest. Their college tutor, Archdeacon Thorpe, welcomed the bold suggestion with good-humoured encouragement; and a small knot of fellow-workmen was soon collected, including, amongst others, the present Bishop of Carlisle, the late Archdeacon Freeman, Professor F. A. Paley, Professor Venables, and Mr. Beresford Hope; while among the Seniors, Dr. Mill gave the aid of his great name. A society was formed, called—why, it might be difficult to say—"The Cambridge Camden Society."' In this case, as in so many others, the start was three-quarters of the battle, and for a term of years covering two generations of undergraduate life, the Camden Society was a noteworthy element in Cambridge

<sup>1</sup> In an obituary notice of Mr. Beresford Hope.

life, active, self-assured, and, it must be owned, not overburdened with deference for academic authority, and accordingly duly resented in turn by old-fashioned Dons.

How could it be otherwise, when, as a contemporary of Neale's at Trinity tells us:<sup>1</sup> 'There was the attempt of certain Trinity men to shame the Fellows and Dons of colleges into something like a respectable attendance at the college chapels, attendance being rigidly enforced upon the undergraduates. This was attempted by publishing lists of attendance upon the part of the Dons, and actually by offering the prize of a handsome Bible to the one who attended most regularly. The prize was secured by a Fellow who afterwards became a colonial bishop; but it would have been given to a well-known Dean, had it not been part of his every-day duty as Dean to be present at chapel. Some profanely called this effort "A Society for promoting Christianity amongst the Dons."'

I have not space to pursue the fortunes of the society, either under its original or new name, during the twenty-seven years of its existence, nor of the great work it accomplished. Those who are curious in such matters may find much to interest them, especially in the early volumes of the *Ecclesiologist*.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Edward J. Boyce, *St. Margaret's Magazine*, No. 3, p. 124.

Mr. Mowbray's well-known *Reformation and Deformation* was not exaggerated.

The *Ecclesiologist* continued to be published until December 1868; the last number being the one hundred and fifty-third, it had reached its majority—exactly twenty-one years.

In the number for October 1866 occurs the following 'In Memoriam':—

'It is scarcely necessary to say in this place that Mr. Neale was one of the original founders of the Cambridge Camden Society, and one of the earliest and ablest and most constant contributors to the pages of the *Ecclesiologist*. He lived long enough to see the complete triumph of the great principles for which he had laboured so zealously. . . . He has left behind him the reputation of being one of the most learned theologians, one of the most erudite scholars, one of the best linguists, one of the sweetest hymnologists, or perhaps the foremost liturgist of his time.'

I cannot pretend to pass any judgment on his poems, and I would not undertake the ungracious task of criticising them were I competent to do so. Some persons allege that his metres occasionally halt, and that he now and then introduces ill-adapted words and disjointed rhythms. But the influence of his hymns is indisputable, and they are valued wherever the English language is known. Many a

sad soul has been cheered by his translation from the Greek, 'Art thou weary? art thou languid?' Many a mourner has been comforted by his rendering from the Latin, 'Brief life is here our portion.' Many a Christian has learnt to realise the communion of saints by his 'Jerusalem the Golden,' and had his faith and love kindled by his 'Jesus, the very thought is sweet,' 'O happy band of pilgrims,' and many other hymns and translations too numerous to name. What Dr. Dykes did for hymn tunes, Dr. Neale did for hymns. Nor do I feel competent to speak as it deserves of his greatest work, with which his name will always be connected—the foundation of the Convent or Sisterhood of St. Margaret. Suffice it to say, that in this and its daughter foundations has been realised the truth that in acts of self-sacrifice and self-devotion on the part of Christian women this prosaic nineteenth century is not behind any period of the Church's history. The religious life has been as thoroughly realised by these noble-hearted daughters of the Church of England as in any other part of the Church Catholic, and that in the most real and practical ways, such as the care of the sick, the charge of orphans, the education of girls, the preparation of vestments of grace and beauty, besides direct missionary work undertaken in our large centres of population.

His reputation as a Church historian and liturgist

was known all over Europe, especially in Russia and Greece. The Emperor Nicholas recognised the value of his *History of the Eastern Church* by presenting him with a valuable manuscript endorsed with the imperial autograph. 'His loss,' says Mr. Moultrie, 'is felt far beyond the bounds of the little English Church of which he was so faithful a member. I myself was in a Russian church after his decease. I did not know the priest, nor he me, but I went up before the liturgy began, and told him of our loss, asking him to remember the departed in the prayers of the office. He expressed the most lively sorrow at the news, and immediately complied with my request, first asking what was his Christian name, as by the baptismal name alone the Eastern Church makes memorial of the departed.'

Speaking of the hold Neale quietly gained over the hearts of those who saw much of him, the same old acquaintance says: 'He was ever most kind and considerate towards the workmen employed on the new convent buildings, and was on the spot many times a day to watch their progress. After he was taken ill, he went to see the building, now and then, in a hand-chair. As soon as he arrived on the spot, several of them were ready to carry him, chair and all, round the works, that he might not be shaken by the rough paths. Very often they have with tears expressed their desire to see him about with them

again. On the day of his funeral it was thought better that all but the bearers (who were purposely chosen from *his* workmen) should continue their work. The Sisters yielded to what appeared to them their better judgment on this arrangement. But, poor fellows, they could not keep away, they almost all gave up work and came to the funeral. It was a touching sight.'

Another circumstance witnessed to his widespread influence, and that was that around the same grave were representatives of all branches of the Church Catholic, Greek, Roman, and Anglican. When, too, the tidings of his death were telegraphed to the Patriarch of Holy Russia, the same bell tolled for Dr. Neale, which is used for dignified ecclesiastics of the Orthodox Communion.

The following Sunday his hymns were sung in countless churches, and what more suitable, considering the comparative shortness of his busy life, for he died at the age of forty-nine years, than the favourite words—

' Brief life is here our portion,  
Brief sorrow, short-lived care ;  
The life that knows no ending,  
The tearless life, is there.

The morning shall awaken,  
The shadows shall decay ;  
And each true-hearted servant  
Shall shine as doth the day.'



There, in his quiet grave in the beautiful churchyard of East Grinstead, surmounted by the emblem of salvation, he sleeps till the awakening at the Resurrection of the Just.

X.

## A Sweet Singer of Israel:

J. B. DYKES, MUS. DOC.,

VICAR OF ST. OSWALD'S, DURHAM.

FEW gifted men have left a more loved memory, or bequeathed a more treasured inheritance than Dr. Dykes.

‘His name,’ says one who knew him well, ‘was something more than a household word, and his countless hymn-tunes, often remarkably beautiful, always singularly expressive, were favourites everywhere; and it is well known that not one single devout feeling which those tunes expressed but was an abiding principle of action with him.’

‘His was the master hand,’ writes another competent judge, ‘that gave life and freedom to hymn-tunes. His followers were legion, his equals were few.’

The family of Dykes are said to be descended from a William de Dykes, who came over at the Conquest.

They settled in the town of Hull, where the grand-

father of Dr. Dykes was for more than half a century a respected clergyman of the 'Evangelical Succession,' so well described by Sir James Stephen in his *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*. Here William Wilberforce was born, in a house in the once fashionable High Street, now occupied by wharves and warehouses. This old mansion, with its oak staircases, carved mantelpieces, and marble flooring, is shown to the curious on payment of sixpences devoted to the local charities. At the beginning of the reign of George III., Wilberforce, 'then a sickly and diminutive child,' might be daily seen passing along the streets with his satchel on his shoulder, to the Grammar School, under Isaac Milner, the Church historian, and subsequent Dean of Carlisle, assisted by his brother Joseph, a man of scarcely less note.

In Hull, on the dock walls, and in sight of ships from every quarter of the globe, stands the tall column erected in honour of the illustrious emancipator of slaves.

The influence of the Milners was ably maintained by the Scotts, sons and grandsons of the commentator, who held the incumbency of St. Mary's for three generations, and by other good men of the same way of thinking. Foremost amongst these was the Rev. Thomas Dykes, LL.B., the grandfather of Dr. Dykes and founder of St. John's Church, built close to the

Wilberforce Memorial. Subsequently, the advowsons of several important livings in the county were purchased by the Simeon Trustees; so that Hull and the East Riding came to be great centres of Evangelicalism.

Old Mr. Dykes was a good representative of his school; he possessed much sweetness of disposition, had a musical voice, a spiritual and refined face, and engaging manner. In some respects he rose above his party; there was little of the Puritan about him except in theory, for he was fond of society, and his company was much courted, especially in serious circles. As St. John's had no parish, the congregation was gathered from all parts of the town, so that he had many followers. On completing his eightieth year, an exhibition in his honour was founded at Cambridge, with preference for his kin. He died in his eighty-sixth year. There are two portraits of him; one in the possession of his family, in which he is depicted in his gown and bands, with his right hand uplifted over the pulpit cushion of red velvet; the other, since engraved as a frontispiece to his life, by his friend the Rev. John King, represents him standing with his arms a-kimbo, a favourite attitude of his. In both, the likeness between the aged divine and his gifted grandson is very remarkable.

Dr. Dykes's father, Mr. William Hey Dykes, inherited many of his sire's estimable qualities,

besides a taste for music, in which he practised his children after the bank of which he was manager was closed.

An uncle of Dr. Dykes, Mr. Frederick Huntington, was a medical man of some celebrity, both for his scientific attainments and for his eccentric benevolence. Like the illustrious Dr. Boerhaave, he divided his patients into two classes, those who could not pay him, whom he considered Christ's patients, and those who could, whom he reckoned as his own patients. Nothing but an extreme case would induce him to see a paying patient till he had dismissed the last gratuitous applicant. By a codicil to his will he left a fine copy of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* to his dearly beloved nephew, John Bacchus Dykes, but whether to confirm him in Protestantism, or to prepare him for martyrdom, he did not say.

Like many Yorkshire towns, Hull is noted for its noble churches. The two ancient parish churches are the Holy Trinity and St. Mary's, now effectively restored; but at the end of the last, and at the beginning of the present century, much spoilt by the prevailing taste. St. John's was built of red brick, after the worst fashion of the Georgian era, with a 'three-decker' directly in front of the communion table, and with galleries all round; but then it could accommodate enormous congregations, all within sight and hearing of the preacher. Missionary meetings,

too, used to be held there, with a platform for the speakers put up for the occasion before the pulpit.

The incumbent of Holy Trinity Church during old Mr. Dykes's ministry at St. John's was the Rev. John Healey Bromby, an excellent scholar. He did the duties of his huge parish single-handed, lived close to his church, and was always at hand to baptize, marry, visit the sick, and bury.

The churchmanship of the town (when not Evangelical) was of an old-fashioned type. The Litany used to be said in Holy Trinity Church on Wednesdays and Fridays, and was attended in Lent by elderly ladies who gave up their card-parties, dressed in black (the church being also hung in black), and read nothing but their Bibles and Prayer-Books, and such books as *The Whole Duty of Man*, Law's *Serious Call to the Unconverted*, and Nelson's *Fasts and Festivals*; very wholesome reading, it must be confessed.

Vicar Bromby, as he used to be called, must have been in some respects in advance of the times, for he taught his daughters Hebrew, and made good scholars of his sons, one of whom became Bishop of Tasmania. In appearance the vicar was not unlike Socrates, which, perhaps, gave rise to the current belief that he was better acquainted with Seneca than with St. Paul. He was no Stoic, however, for he was genially disposed, dined out when he was asked, said grace

before, and nodded to the good old French refugee priest, brother of a former minister of King Louis XVI., to say grace after dinner. He was affable, eschewed religious meetings, preferred politics to polemics (as an old-fashioned Whig), and a game at whist to platform oratory. In his own pulpit he has been known to quote Aristotle, but a sentence in a sermon he preached in a village church just after the passing of the first Reform Bill will give a not unfair idea of his general style: 'In these days we hear a great deal about Reform. Let me give you a piece of advice: the best reform is to make one person better. I need not say who that person should be.'

Mr. Bromby lived to close on a century, and on his ninety-third birthday he entertained his friends at dinner, carved a couple of ducks, and drank a pint of port.

The Evangelicals regarded this even-going style of life as savouring of worldliness, and, indeed, their general persuasion was that the vicar did not preach the gospel. In spite, however, of partisans, the two old clergymen continued excellent friends, and mutually respected each other.

Mr. Bromby outlived Mr. Dykes, and succeeded him as Master of the Charter House, an ancient foundation, once belonging to the Carthusian Friars, but readapted in Tudor times to afford homes for

decayed gentlefolks. The inmates were fortunate in having two such Masters in succession.

Dr. Dykes was born in 1823, and christened John Bacchus, the latter seemingly inappropriate name being a frequent one in his mother's family of Huntington, as the registers of Holy Trinity Church, Hull, show.

In those days there was a strictness in 'serious' families of which youths in these have no experience. Children were made to be early risers, and to count nothing a hardship. They had to obey their parents implicitly, and to submit without murmuring to the discipline of the rod. On Sundays they were taken to church twice or thrice; they had to tell the texts, the heads and general scope of the sermons, to say the Catechism standing in a row with their hands behind them, and to repeat from memory the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel. They were allowed to read only 'Sunday' books, dry enough at best, but more profitable, if for nothing else, at least by way of discipline, than the unlimited supply of yellow-backs now read without scruple on Sundays as well as on week-days.

Dancing was forbidden; so were cards and backgammon as games of chance. Chess might be played, if too much time were not spent over it; billiards were regarded with pious horror; you might play at draughts, but not at dominoes.

There was some excuse for this decided line because of the prevailing laxity in 'worldly' circles,



and it is possible that a little more of such strictness might be a gain now.

Anyhow the Dykeses became intellectual and cultivated as well as robust and manly. They were capital pedestrians, and thought nothing of a thirty miles walk. One of my brothers, before entering Cambridge, accompanied them on a tour to the English Lakes, and performed the unusual feat of walking three hundred miles in ten days. We were cousins on the mother's side, and one of our greatest pleasures used to be for them to walk eleven miles out and eleven miles in to visit us in the country, and for us to go the same distance to spend the day in the town, reaching home somewhere about midnight. On a Sunday we were permitted to walk in to hear a noted missionary or preacher, and to sit with John Dykes in the organ-loft at St. John's, of which church he was honorary organist. He could go through the whole service at ten years of age, and a little later on his voluntaries were remarkable, and indicative of his original and precocious genius. To me the complicated machinery, and the dexterity with which he passed his little fingers over the keyboard, and his feet over the pedals were simply marvellous.

As for the missionary meetings, the only impression they made on our youthful minds was that all the heathen would be lost unless they had the good

luck to fall in with a missionary, or a missionary with them. Dykes was more impressionable, for when he was a very little fellow, he wanted to go and convert the heathen. His converts were to be from the Hottentots; one of his sisters was to go with him; they were to take a barrel-organ, on which he was to play; then she was to astonish the natives by striking off a lucifer match, just invented; and when a crowd was got together, he was to preach to them.

He and his brothers went as day-boys to Kingston College, a proprietary school of some note, under Mr. H. R. Francis, a distinguished scholar and connection of Sir Philip Francis, the translator of Horace and reputed author of the *Letters of Junius*. But when John Dykes was about seventeen, the family removed to Wakefield, where he entered the West Riding Proprietary School, in which his name frequently appears as a prizeman. In stature he was a little over middle height, hair light brown, eyes blue and expressive, head intellectual and indicative of genius; he talked rapidly, as did all his family, had a merry laugh, with a keen appreciation of fun; he walked with a light and 'springy' step. Few men changed less till work and anxiety told upon him; in the best sense the boy was father to the man.

In 1843 he entered as a Yorkshire scholar at St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, where his college

tutor was the Rev. Percival Frost, also a Hull man, Second Wrangler, and first Smith's prizeman.

It was intended to place the young undergraduate under Simeonite influence, in accordance with the family traditions, but it might have been foreseen that, gifted as he was, fond of society, devoted to music, and literary in his tastes, he would recoil from its narrowness. Moreover, then as now, Cambridge was noted for its school of profound divines. The waves of what is usually considered the Oxford Movement had reached the banks of the Cam, even if the impulse had not been first given there, as Dean Burgon contended, by the learned and saintly Hugh James Rose. Dr. William Hodge Mill, a man of European reputation and a distinguished Orientalist, was Christian advocate; J. J. Blunt was the Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, and was gathering in the thoughtful undergraduates by his personal influence and by his valuable lectures on 'Scripture Coincidences,' 'The Duties of the Parish Priest,' and 'Church History.' The Rev. Professor Scholefield was interesting scholars in New Testament Greek, and the Rev. Harvey Goodwin, late Bishop of Carlisle, then vicar of St. Edmunds, was guiding the inner life of the University, and to some extent filling the place of Mr. Simeon, though on distinctively Church lines. Meanwhile, the æstheticism now so general was being developed, if indeed it did not originate

with those illustrious Cantabs—A. J. Beresford-Hope, John Mason Neale, and B. Webb, the founders of the Cambridge Camden, subsequently the Ecclesiological, Society. The wealth of the ancient liturgies, hitherto almost unknown, was being brought to light, and the old Greek and Latin hymns were being rendered into English by scholars like Dr. Neale and Dr. Wordsworth. What was still wanting was their setting to music, and this labour of love was reserved for Dykes and others similarly if not equally gifted. Just about the time of Dykes's entrance into Cambridge a musical society was formed, of which he was elected president, although he had declined the honour in favour of Sir William Thomson, the eminent mathematician—a proof that mathematical and musical talents are often combined; the young scholar of St. Catherine's also took mathematical honours. Dykes's reputation became thus thoroughly established, and entitled him to a complimentary and discriminating notice in Grove's *Dictionary of Music*. No one, however, who knew him later on, and realised his devout character, would have credited him with being one of the best comic singers in the University. As might be expected, he was a welcome guest at innumerable parties, where he fascinated every one by the charm of his manners and the flow of his spirits, and his willingness to contribute to the evening's hilarity by singing, or playing, pieces grave or gay. No con-

temporary will ever forget him at Cambridge. All this might have proved a snare to him but for the conscientious way he prepared for his work in college, and for his naturally devotional character, strengthened, it is said, by the impressions made by a recovery from a severe attack of scarlet fever. Thus, whatever his engagements, he never passed a day without carefully studying the Holy Scriptures, especially the Psalms, on the liturgical and rhythmical character of which he was no mean authority. He also, from his earliest years, had a great love for hymns; and thus he was able, when the time came, to adapt them to those tunes which have since made his name so famous.

Dykes was ordained in the year 1847 to the curacy of Malton, in his native county, where he married the lady who survives him; but within two years from his ordination he was promoted to a minor canonry in the cathedral of Durham, shortly to be followed by his election as precentor. Good old Mr. Dykes had long deprecated the time his grandson wasted (!) over music, and used to upbraid him thus: 'What, John, fiddling again, fiddling again? I don't know what will come of it.' The grandsire died two years before J. B. Dykes's removal to Durham, but in the son's letter to his father, announcing his election, he wrote, 'I wonder what my grandfather would have said could he have known what "fiddling

again " has done for me.' The dignified fane of St. Cuthbert's, with its stately surroundings, its time-honoured traditions, and its ecclesiastical pre-eminence, made a deep impression on the new minor canon, but there was a formality in it all which was foreign to his devout and somewhat emotional nature. Bishops of Durham till recent times had been Princes Palatine ; old people used to tell of their magnificence and munificence, of the almost royal state they kept up, of their dining off gold, waited on by retinues of servants in purple liveries, of their travelling in coaches and four, if not of six, preceded by outriders. The stalls were amply endowed ; the deanery was the richest in the kingdom ; two bishops (Chester and Exeter)<sup>1</sup> made up for the poverty of their Sees by holding Durham prebends. The Chapter were currently reported to maintain amongst themselves a *chef* in the person of a French cook. It is said, too, that they looked coldly on all who were not within the magic circle of the palace, the college, and the county. It is but justice to them, however, to say that they fairly represented the scholarship and position of the high-placed clergy of the period, and that Dr. Dykes invariably spoke of their courtesy and kindness.

The Precentor was far-seeing enough to discern that if cathedrals were to escape the drastic reforms for which a mischievous pretext had been given in

<sup>1</sup> Before their time Bishop Burgess of St. David's.

Bishop Blomfield's measure for the suppression of prebends in order to endow small livings, they must be utilised and their services popularised. He was not slow to watch his opportunity, and in spite of opposition from the older members, soon gained an influence over the choir, due to his force of character and professional ability, which in due time raised the reputation of Durham to be foremost among our northern cathedrals, and paved the way for what has been carried out elsewhere, and specially at St. Paul's, through the agency of his friend and co-worker, Dr., now Sir John, Stainer.

He also maintained friendly relations with the University of Durham, and became the spiritual adviser of many of its members. In fact, few clergymen of the North of England were more frequently consulted, both personally and by letter. His correspondence on theological and musical questions, especially the latter, extended to America and the colonies. In 1862 he resigned his precentorship on his appointment by the Dean and Canons to the vicarage of St. Oswald's, Durham. Of his work at St. Oswald's, those only can speak who knew something of his inner life, visited him in his parsonage, or saw him in his church or on his parochial rounds. He made his household what a priest's family should be, or, as the Prayer-Book says, he made himself and them wholesome 'examples and patterns to the

flock of Christ.' His services were models, and he often officiated in the stalls and pulpit and at the organ. 'Beyond his own parish,' wrote the present Dean of Durham, 'no place owed Dr. Dykes more gratitude, or was more a witness of his zealous labours, than Durham Cathedral. Eminently qualified by his genius to conduct its noble services, no one could better appreciate their religious power and beauty; and no man could regard his office in a more religious light, and laboured more personally to make those who attended and who assisted in them feel that to sing to the praise and glory of God is an essential function of God's worship. And surely thus to have tuned the hymns, and struck as it were the keynote of adoration, was to hold no small place in the Church.' In 1861 the University of Durham conferred on him by diploma the degree of Doctor of Music. He was presented to the then Warden, Archdeacon Thorpe, by Dr. Henshaw, the cathedral organist, and Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley. Among his other intimates were the late Dr. W. H. Monk and Sir Henry Baker, with whom he acted in preparing the well-known *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.

During the Church Congress at Leeds in 1872, I stayed with Dykes and his friend Dr. Stainer under the hospitable roof of a brother and sister of the former. The special paper on Church music was read by Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley, and the discussion



was continued by Dr. Stainer, but, although there were loud calls for Dykes, he declined to take any part in it. As he listened to the performance of the Leeds parish church choir, he exclaimed audibly, 'They are giants! they are giants!'

Here is a story he told us, which professional organists will know how to appreciate, particularly those who recognise the eminent personage involved. The churchwardens of a Yorkshire village had placed an organ in their church, and, in the delight of their hearts at their new acquisition, told what they had done to the Archdeacon at the next visitation. The Archdeacon, not knowing the nature of the instrument, and bethinking himself of a means of acquiring funds for some needful repairs, advised them to have a grand opening, with a collection, to invite Dr. C. to play, and to advertise the service in the local papers. Well, the advice was taken, the invitations sent out, the placards printed and posted, and the all-important day arrived, and with it Dr. C., who was at once shown up to the singing-loft, where stood the instrument in a case brilliant with gilded pipes, known to the profession as 'dummies.' 'But where is the keyboard?' inquired the great man, who had already been somewhat disconcerted by the insignificant size of the organ. 'Oh,' replied the churchwarden, 'we turns *un* round wi' that there,' pointing to the handle. The amazement and indigna-

tion of Dr. C. on finding that he had been invited to open a *barrel-organ*, may be better imagined than described.

Dykes and Stainer were each occupied in criticising a collection of hymns; one, I think, had that of the S.P.C.K., the other a later edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. In the intervals of the Congress meetings, and late into the night, they went at their work, till human infirmity could bear it no longer, for one might tire even of the music of the spheres. Well, what was to be done? If something were not devised, they would go on playing till doomsday, or, anyhow, till the dawn of day. We were all expected to go to an early celebration, some mile and a half off, and we were much fatigued with speeches and papers. So our hostess took me into consultation. 'Is there any way of stopping these two men?' she asked. A happy thought struck me. 'Where is the main gas tap?' On being told, downstairs, I went and turned off the gas. 'There's something the matter with the gas,' exclaimed Stainer. 'It's going out,' called out Dykes. 'Going, going, gone!' I shouted from the landing; 'and it means that you are both to go to bed.' So, as there was no help for it, to bed they went.

For some years Dr. Dykes used to pay us an annual visit at Tenby. It was just at the times when he was at his best, full of joyous spirits, and

happy in his work, both in the ecclesiastical and in the musical world. He won all hearts in social intercourse and in the church, where he not only preached, but played the organ, taking his own music only after earnest request. When he first came to see us, he was hardly at all altered from what he was when a youth. Alas! what a change came over him a little later. But of this anon.

Dr. Dykes's contributions to theology were of no inconsiderable value. They included a devout and learned sermon, preached in Durham Cathedral in his turn as Precentor, entitled 'Sacramental Life,' several interesting papers in the *Ecclesiastic*, then edited by the well-known Canon Chamberlain, of Christ Church and St. Thomas', Oxford, and a letter to the Bishop of Durham, entitled 'Eucharistic Truth and Ritual,' a fearless, able, and outspoken vindication of the Church's faith and practice. This letter was called forth by the prosecution to which, as the Vicar of St. Oswald's, he was subjected by the Church Association, and by the Bishop of Durham (Baring), who unhappily adopted the policy of the party it represented.

Dr. Dykes is, indeed, so well known for his music, that few, comparatively, are aware that he was one of the most prominent confessors for the liberty in faith and ritual of the Church of England, for he

not only, as has just been stated, had the honour to be singled out for prosecution by the Church Association, but to be condemned without a hearing by Archbishop Tait in the House of Lords, on introducing the now exploded Public Worship Regulation Act. It was also with reference to St. Oswald's that Lord Beaconsfield delivered himself of his alliterative pun of 'Mass in Masquerade.' Dr. Dykes found an able defender, however, in the generous and magnanimous A. J. Beresford-Hope, who vindicated him in his book on *Worship in the Church of England*, and also in his place in the House of Commons. The men of this generation indeed, who have succeeded quietly to an inheritance of decency and order, won for them by their elders in the faith, can hardly realise at what a cost. Many a sensitive spirit besides Dykes quailed before the storm of misrepresentation and actual persecution. The Bishop, alas! took the course, then only too common, of trying to reduce a contumacious clergyman to obedience to his own episcopal interpretation of the law, founded on Privy Council findings, by refusing to license him a curate, thus making the parish suffer for the mistakes, real or supposed, of the incumbent. The saintly Vicar of St. Oswald's held on single-handed, never giving up one service, visiting his flock morning, noon, and night, and administering ghostly counsel and advice to all who applied to him, till health and strength

gave way. His last cry of grief was expressed in the touching conclusion of his letter, 'Da pacem Domine.'

He was taken to Switzerland, in the hope that the sight of the mountains and glaciers and the breathing of the invigorating air might bring back some measure of health and strength. For a time it was feared that he would never be able to return to England, but during a temporary revival he was brought to Ben Rhydding in the pleasant Wharfedale of his native county. But when the cold weather set in, with the easterly winds blowing over the mountains and the moors, he gradually faded. A little later on he was removed to St. Leonard's-on-Sea, where, hoping against hope, the doctors thought it possible that rest and the softer air might restore him. But it was too late; he became weaker, and sank away, with the commendatory prayer said by the voice he loved best to hear on earth, and with his wife and children around him. He was laid to rest at St. Oswald's, almost under the shadow of the towers of the great cathedral where his beautiful music had been so often heard, and his holy influence so long felt. He was followed to the grave by loving friends and devoted parishioners. On the following Sunday his music was performed in numerous churches all over England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, and, when the telegraph conveyed the news of his death, in

America and the colonies. It was then seen what a loss the Church had sustained, and the first to acknowledge this was Bishop Baring, who sent a donation of one hundred pounds to the subscription of ten thousand pounds contributed as a testimonial, and this with every expression of sympathy with the widow and orphans. Nor is it felt less as time goes on, for not very long ago, a brother clergyman was on a visit to a well-known Durham incumbent, not a High Churchman. The friends were scanning one of the striking views to be seen in that most picturesque city, when the host turned to his guest and observed, 'Ah! as I look across the water, I see the parish of the saintly Dykes.' One of his contributions to the literature of music proves him to have been a master of the subject. In the second section of the ritual introduction of the Prayer-Book, in Blunt's *Annotated Book of Common Prayer*, Dr. Dykes enters into the history of sacred song, and traces it through the Patriarchal, Levitical, and Christian dispensations, with a learned excursus on the music of pagan Greece and Rome. He tells us that the old Greek and Roman metres were freely employed in the ancient Christian hymns, and that the music to which they (the hymns) were first allied bore no very remote resemblance to that used in the pagan temples. He also discusses the ancient plain song, for the exclusive use of which he is no advocate.

After this, no one need be surprised that Dr. Dykes made free use of the best secular music, and adapted it to the service of sacred song. With the same comprehensive spirit, he contributed a considerable number of tunes to the leading Nonconformist selections. Some High Church friends remonstrated with him, but his reply was characteristic: 'Every one should praise God "with the best member that he has," and in the best music that can be got.' When a Church hymn-book was compiled for the Welsh, the adaptation of tunes to their poetical and rhythmical tongue was entrusted to Dykes. He made no charge for his labours, although they were ultimately substantially acknowledged by the proprietors of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. The first, however, to render him any pecuniary remuneration was the Rev. Dr. Allon, the well-known Dissenting minister, and editor of the *Congregational Hymnal*.<sup>1</sup> Of his actual performance on the organ, visitors to Durham, who were fortunate enough to hear the Precentor, have often spoken with enthusiasm. On one occasion, on a visit to one of our largest northern cathedrals, he was asked to take the instrument. The Dean was not aware of the substitute, and hastened up to the organ-loft to compliment the performer. Great was his surprise, on drawing aside the curtain, to find the seat occupied by Dr. Dykes

<sup>1</sup> I am not quite sure of the title.

Another testimony I must cite, even at the risk of being charged with egotism.

I had been paying Cardinal Newman a visit, when we were talking over some old reminiscences. I do not remember how it was brought in, but I happened to mention his well-known hymn, 'Lead, Kindly Light,' which he said he wrote when a very young man, as he was becalmed on the Mediterranean for a week in 1832. I ventured to say, 'It must be a great pleasure to you to know that you have written a hymn treasured wherever English-speaking Christians are to be found; and where are they not to be found?' He was silent for some moments, and then said with emotion, 'Yes, deeply thankful, and more than thankful.' Then, after another pause, 'But you see it is not the hymn, but the *tune* that has gained the popularity—the tune is Dykes's, and Dr. Dykes was a great master.' It need not be said that the tune is '*Lux Benigna*'; the words and music had been published in a very attractive form, with illustrations, but, strange to say, His Eminence had not seen a copy until I had the honour of presenting him with one.

This testimony is all the more valuable, for it is well known that Dr. Newman was an accomplished musician, as his kinsman, the Rev. J. Mozley, says of him: 'He very early mastered music as a science, and attained such a proficiency that, had he not



become a Doctor of the Church, he would have been a Paganini.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Dykes's Communion Service and *Te Deum* in F are used in all our cathedrals and parish churches where there are choirs sufficiently trained to sing them. His anthems, 'These are they,' and 'The Lord is my Shepherd,' are justly esteemed for their devotional character and musical excellence.

One who knew Dykes well,<sup>2</sup> and who is capable of appreciating the highest efforts of genius, speaks of his Burial Service, the treasured possession of Durham Cathedral, and still unpublished, as 'the most devotional composition that has ever been written for the English Church.' It is a matter of everlasting regret that it was not sung at the author's own funeral. Yet who that was present among the sympathising thousands gathered together around the grave of the late Bishop of Durham could fail to be touched by its affecting strains and the associations thereby recalled? In the midst of the absorbing grief for the loss of that great scholar and prelate, many a one was thinking also of Dykes, and of the joy it would have been to him to have used the good gifts with which he was endowed under the episcopal rule of a Lightfoot instead of a Baring. But *Deo*

<sup>1</sup> *Recollections of Oriel and the Oxford Movement.*

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Collinson, the accomplished organist of St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh.

*aliter visum*, and so it has come to pass that, whilst the miserable disputes that distressed his sensitive spirit have passed into deserved oblivion, or are remembered only with shame and regret, his genius is the more appreciated and his name the more honoured in proportion as the true spirit of divine worship and the character of sacred music are understood. In a word, his works are regarded by the Christian world as a 'perpetual possession.'

## XI.

# A Dear Old Dean:

G. H. BOWERS, D.D.,

DEAN OF MANCHESTER.

**B**EFORE I introduce my 'Old Church Worthies,' I think I must, for the benefit of the general reader, say a word or two about the 'Old Church' itself. Well, Manchester is said to have been constituted a parish in the year 446, and its parish church a collegiate church about one thousand years later. So that it has been more or less mixed up with the various and eventful history of our country. The original chapter was composed of one Warden, eight Fellows, four clerks, and six choristers; the building is said to have cost £50,000, an enormous sum in those days, and the associated clergy were styled 'the Guild or Company of the Blessed Virgin.'

Its first warden was John Huntington, who died in 1457, and was buried in the centre of the choir. His rebus is still to be seen upon the eastern side of the middle arch of the choir (or rather the Lady

Chapel). On the left hand side of the arch is a huntsman with dogs, on the right hand side a vessel called a 'tonne' or 'ton'; and these devices put together represent the name of Hunting-ton. Dr. Huntington was learned in the learning of those times; one very devout, magnificent, and of public spirit. He was the mover and contriver of that great work of erecting the stone church, now in being, of which he built the choir and aisles.<sup>1</sup>

The collegiate foundation had the good fortune to escape the rapacity of Henry VIII., to fall under that of the Boy King, and his sacrilegious advisers. Later on, Queen Mary refounded the college; but restored to it none of its revenues. Later on still, Queen Elizabeth dissolved, and then refounded it in a way, but gave back no forfeited funds. That good work devolved on 'King Charles I. of blessed memory,' as the charter has it, an earnest, indeed, of his well-known intention of giving back to the Church at large all she had been deprived of. In 1847 the collegiate church became a cathedral, and the Warden and Fellows, Dean and Canons. I do not suppose that the warden and fellows were much better or much worse than their contemporaries elsewhere. No doubt, their charter notwithstanding, a good many of them were pluralists, and accepted without reserve the good things that Providence

<sup>1</sup> *Manchester Historical Recorder.*

bestowed on them, and were duly thankful, but they were mostly men of mark, gentlemen and scholars, and Manchester was all the better for them. They caused the clerical body to be respected; they were looked up to, and they kept up a tone of churchmanship quite unknown in towns like Liverpool and Birmingham. Besides which, the presence in their midst of a stately church in which weekly celebrations, and daily choral, and early Sunday services were held, was not without its effects on the lay people. But of the love borne by Manchester folk to their 'Old Church' I shall have opportunities of saying a word or two later on.

But I must begin my series with my dear old Dean, Dr. Bowers, or, to give him his full title, the Very Reverend George Hull Bowers, D.D. Some of us can recall him to mind as he posted down with rapid steps from his house in Salford Crescent to his cathedral, followed, rather than accompanied, by his daughters, or his sister-in-law who then kept house for him, for none of his womankind could quite keep up with him. Dr. Bowers was rather short in stature, and not over decanal in his dress, although he did wear a rose in his hat. The photographs do not give a just idea of him, for you cannot photograph a smile; so that whilst you get his somewhat grim, if not austere, features, you do not get the genial glow which often illuminated his face like a sunbeam in snowtime.

Dean Bowers was made Dean in 1847, the year Bishop Lee was made Bishop, and the year before I was ordained. He succeeded Dr. Herbert, a brother of the Earl of Carnarvon. Dean Herbert was, according to better judges than I, a good scholar, but he was so innocent of *the* 'ology' (theology), that he is said to have never heard of the illustrious author of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*. Report says that when somebody talked to him about the 'judicious Hooker,' he thought of a renowned florist of that name. 'Yes,' said he; 'he *was* very judicious in the cultivation of roses.' Dr. Herbert really was not joking, but he must have had some sense of humour, for there is one *bon mot* recorded of him on the authority of Dr. Parkinson, the genial canon. It seems that from time immemorial the wardens, now Deans, had to provide the candles for the altar, always lit during the twelve days of Christmas. Somehow or other, when the wardens were absent,—till Dean Bowers they were mostly pluralists,—the candles were absent too. Dr. Parkinson noted this to the warden. 'Yes,' was the reply, 'but then, you see, I leave the sticks behind.' I do not suppose that the warden knew anything about the significance of the two lights, and perhaps he thought that the warden, if not the light of the world, was the light of the 'Old Church.' But be that as it may, it used to be a very pretty custom, and one which drew many a visitor, to see the choir lit

up with wax candles during Yuletide. The minor canons had the candle-ends as their perquisite, and I have heard Canon Wray say how they sent the verger to puff them out before they were burnt too low to be of any use. Dean Bowers was one of the kindest of men, and, as I have hinted, his grim features gave no indication of his disposition. He was possessed of good sterling sense and knowledge of human nature; but, as I have often heard him say, he was sent into the world without an imagination. Perhaps he agreed with Bishop Butler's estimate of the imagination, as 'that forward, delusive faculty, ever obtruding beyond its sphere; of some assistance, indeed, to apprehension, but the author of all error;' or with the Cambridge Professor, who said of 'Paradise Lost' that it was worthless, because 'it proved nothing.' Certainly, I never heard the good Dean quote any poetry, or, as old Weller said, anything 'werging on the poetical.' But he could tell a good story.

His first preferment was, I believe, the chaplaincy of Bedford Gaol, in which capacity, and as tutor to the young Duke of Bedford, he gained the interest of the Russell family, to which he was indebted for his subsequent success in life. So valuable indeed did his patron find the chaplain's experience, that he embodied a bill subsequently introduced into Parliament chiefly in accordance with his suggestions. And so well did he satisfy the Duke of Bedford as tutor

that in due time His Grace presented him to the family living of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, from which post he was promoted to the Deanery of Manchester.

Here is one of his prison chaplain's experiences. He told us the story one day after dinner:—

‘There was a prisoner on whom I did flatter myself I had made some impression, and he left with good-conduct marks, and promises of amendment, in all of which I believed. He was in for poaching, an offence thought a good deal more of in those days than in these. Well, he was discharged, and I heard no more of him till one night I was riding down through Woburn woods, after dining with the Duke. Just in the darkest part of my route, bang, bang, went the reports of two guns, or two barrels. I had reined in my horse, which started, and would have thrown a careless rider, when over the fence jumped two poachers. The moon shone out, and in one of them I recognised my old ward. I stared. “Your reverence,” said he, cap in hand and his gun behind his back, “please not to peach”; and with that he threw a brace of hares across my saddle, and re-jumped over the fence. I called out to him, and told him I wouldn’t “peach” if he would come and give an account of himself the next day. He came, and I found it the old story—he couldn’t get work, because “no man had hired him.” Well, I gave him a good talking to, and took him into my service, and an honest



servant I never had. One remarkable thing happened, too, for from that day poaching ceased in our neighbourhood. "Set a thief to catch a thief."

Every one knows what a strong advocate of the Free and Open Church movement the Dean was. The reason why he told me one day. 'I never but once,' he said, 'attended a man on the scaffold. He had not been badly brought up, and tried to get into a church where the pew system was rigidly kept up. The pew doors were closed against him. He tried again once, he tried again twice, and a third time, with the same results. The end of it was, he made a vow never to cross the threshold of a church again, and he kept his vow, fell into loose ways, got into bad company, committed a felony, and lived to be hanged. Those were days when men were hanged for other things besides murder; he was hanged for sheep-stealing.'

The Dean was not eloquent, but he was never tedious. His sermons were written in the purest English, with no display, and no tricks of rhetoric. He was a capital critic of other men's sermons, and I am indebted to him for many a hint worth listening to. One day I had preached longer than usual, and got a good wiggling for my pains from old Canon Wray, the then senior member of the Chapter and Sub-Dean. So the Dean turned round; he was in the act of hanging up his surplice in his crib in the chapter-house. 'Our people,' quoth he good-

humouredly, 'will listen to you with interest for twenty minutes, with an effort for five-and-twenty minutes, but beyond five-and-twenty minutes St. Paul himself could not compete with a burning pudding.'

On another occasion I preached a sermon, written, I must confess, in *sesquipedalia verba*. 'Take your manuscript home,' said the Dean, after a few complimentary remarks to take the sting out of his criticism, 'revise and rewrite it; reduce your four syllables into three, your three into two, your two into one; strike out your Latinised words, and put in plain English; make your sentences short, be brief, and your sermon will be none the worse.' I did so, and preached it again not very long after; whether the congregation recognised it or no, the Dean did. 'The second edition,' said he, 'is a decided improvement on the first. Make a point of rewriting your sermons if your mature judgment tells you they are worth it.' I had to preach twice one Sunday, and had no manuscript ready; however, I had prepared for the Sunday school, and also for St. Alban's, so I went up into the pulpit and preached without manuscript. But this old Canon Wray could not put up with, so I got a sound rating in the chapter-house. 'It was an innovation, a thing never heard of in the Old Church. It was intolerable, inexcusable,' etc. The Dean winked at me, and put his finger on his lips behind Canon Wray's back, to hold my peace;

and when the old gentleman walked out, and was fairly out of hearing, he said, 'Preach whichever way you please, but do not anger our old friend; take a manuscript up with you into the pulpit and turn it upside down, and no one will be the wiser.' I did so, and Canon Wray complimented me on my performance, with a special encomium on written sermons. The Dean saw the ruse. 'You are a poor deceiver,' he said, 'for you forgot to turn over the leaves.' One Sunday afternoon the Dean told me that I had concluded rather abruptly. I replied, 'Mr. Dean, I always shut up when I see three persons yawning.' 'That depends on who is yawning.' 'But what if it should be the Dean himself?' 'Oh, don't take it for granted that your sermon is a dull one; but that the Dean is suffering from a fit of indigestion.'

One hot afternoon a learned dignitary was preaching, whose firstly, secondly, thirdly, and to conclude, lulled me into a delicious nap as I sat in my stall. 'I hope,' said the Dean, when service was over, 'that you enjoyed your slumbers.' I apologised. I had taken an early service, I was going to preach again, etc. etc. 'My dear fellow, you did well to sleep on and take your rest, for, I assure you, you lost nothing.' After this, when I was caught napping, the good Dean used to pass on his snuff-box from his stall to mine. Somehow or other, one could not picture him without his snuff-box; he took snuff in his stall, he took snuff

in the chapter-house, he took snuff slyly before he went up into the pulpit, and more openly when he came down. An old Irish woman, from the work-house, a centenarian when she died, used to go up the chapter-house steps to get a pinch from 'the Dane,' as she called him, whenever he came out, and always got a shilling as well.

The Dean was very hospitable, as deans and dignitaries were expected to be in those days. There was a tradition amongst us that he reserved his best port for those state occasions in which he appeared in his silk stockings and silver buckles. My old colleague, Minor Canon Johnson, used to advise me to treat myself to an extra glass when we observed our host to be in full dress. He always attributed the decay of orthodoxy to the new fashion of drinking claret instead of port. Alas for Mr. Johnson's theory! the Dean himself told me in his later days that he had given up his port, and felt all the better for it. I am sure he had not given up his orthodoxy, and I never heard of his having gout. Dr. Bowers was no respecter of persons. I was present when some persons were discussing whether a sister of one of the clergy should be visited because she had become a public singer. 'You may do as you please,' said he curtly. 'Mrs. Bowers has asked her to dinner, and if God has given the girl talents, why should she not make the most of them? If I'm paid for preaching, why should not

she be paid for singing?' His dinners were very enjoyable, for he had the knack of bringing the right people together. One day at his table I asked the ladies present where in the Old Testament the words were—'He tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb.' One said in one place, one in another, but all agreed that it *was* in the Old Testament. Then I put the question to the Dean.

Dean. 'Nowhere.'

Myself. 'Where then?'

Dean. 'In *Tristram Shandy*, to be sure.'

On which I ventured to say, 'Then you have read *Tristram Shandy*, Mr. Dean?'

'So have you, Mr. Clerk in orders.'

On which I said, '*I* read *Tristram Shandy* when I was a lad, and saw no naughtiness in it.' To which Mr. Dean responded, '*I* read it when I was a lad, and saw *all* the naughtiness in it, but I don't think any harm came of it.'

I have since heard that the words are a Spanish proverb, but I do not vouch for it. Laurence Sterne, undoubted genius as he was, was a great plagiarist.

The story of the Dean and his honorary canons has often been told, but it will bear repeating. The Bishop (Lee) had nominated so many honorary canons that the stalls were all full. On this being remarked to the Dean, he said, 'Never mind; I'll put them into loose-boxes.' No doubt he knew that the

canons' stalls take the name from the accommodation afforded to their *horses* in the stables.

If the Dean was not a very profound scholar, he was a very well-read man in Anglican, and especially in Puritan, theology. He hated pedantry in every form. One day, after getting up in a very cursory way some Hebrew and Septuagint proper names, I must needs say 'Sennachērib' instead of 'Sennachěrib.' This he could not stand. 'I've read and heard all my life, Huntington, about an insolent, boasting fellow of the name of "Sennachěrib"; but who upon earth was "Sennachērib"?' After that, I am sure no one ever did hear of him in the Old Church. I might have given the Dean a 'Roland for his Oliver,' however, for he always persisted in saying 'Trachonītis' instead of 'Trachonītis.' One day, it came out as usual, so when we all went out of church into the chapter-house, and the Dean's back was turned, Dr. Parkinson took his place, with a twinkle in his eye, in the seat of honour. 'Sit down, gentlemen,' said he to his colleagues, and then he turned to me—'Huntington, it is the unanimous decision of this Chapter that you are to ask the Dean to say "Trachonītis," and not "Trachonītis."' I bowed to the dignified assemblage, and replied, 'I dare take as many liberties with the Dean as most men, but I dare not venture to correct his quantities.'

That reminds me of the first time I ever entered

the chapter-house, and of the first time I ever beheld that august body sitting in conclave. It was on the occasion of my being summoned to be told officially of my election as clerk in orders. I went in with some trepidation, not quite knowing whether I was to be addressed in English or in Latin, or in both, or whether there was some ancient form to go through. I trembled for my Latinity, and made my bow, and then the Dean said, as nearly as I can remember: 'We have elected you because we think we have made the best selection in our power. Now, there are nine of us' (including the Bishop, I suppose), 'and we cannot be expected to think all alike. Now remember you've two ears and one tongue;' and with that I was dismissed with a shake of the hand all round save from Canon Wray, who gave me two fingers, a way he had with noncapitular members.

That was, I say, the first interview I ever had with the Dean; the last was in his study, in what proved to be his death-illness. He was much changed, much aged, much thinner, and showed obvious signs of failing. But his greeting was kindlier than ever. He asked me after my wife and family, my work at Tenby, and then on parting he said, with his characteristic simplicity, 'I'm not afraid of what is coming. I have been looking forward to it for many years.' 'I'm rejoiced to hear it,' I could not help saying. 'I knew you would, or I would not have

told you. Good-bye. God bless you ;' and with a warm shake of the hand, and an apology for not going with me to the door, we parted, never to meet again in this world.

Such was my dear old Dean. Dr. Bowers was essentially a good man, and a true man, one who hated pretentiousness in every shape and form. I do not pretend to compare him with deans like Church, and Goulbourn, and Hook, and Burgon, and any comparison between him and his successors Cowie and Oakley would be only an impertinence. They were men of a different stamp. But I say, without fear of contradiction, that he laid the foundation on which those who followed him built. Marlborough men will remember him as a co-founder of their college, and Rossall men as one who, if not an actual founder, took the deepest interest in their school. For myself, I can only think of him with respect and affectionate regret. To 'fond recollection and memory dear' he is now, and ever will be, what he always was to me—'my dear old Dean.'



## XII.

# A Genial Principal:

RICHARD PARKINSON, D.D.,

PRINCIPAL OF ST. BEES, AND CANON OF MANCHESTER.

I BECAME acquainted with Dr. Parkinson in the Michaelmas term of 1846, although I had heard a good deal of him from old friends. Indeed it was 'the tongue of good report heard in his favour' that led me to place myself under him. In those days St. Bees might have been reckoned among the *inaccessa Britannorum*, for you had to make your way to it, if by land, by a succession, or want of succession, of slow and ill-fitting trains; and if by sea, by lumbering steamers plying between Liverpool and Whitehaven; and on your return your travelling companions might chance to be Cumberland pigs on their way to the Lancashire markets. So that of a student going to and from the remoter parts of the country it might be said, as it was of 'pius Æneas,' *'Multum ille et terris jactatus et alto.'* But you had your reward. The scenery is bold and romantic.

On the coast abuts the lofty promontory of St. Bees Head, with the distant view of the peaks of Man, thrown into distincter outline at sunset, especially before a storm. Inland may be discerned the mountains surrounding the Cumberland lakes, and immediately before you the pretty valley betwixt St. Bees and Whitehaven, now threaded by a railway. At night the darkness is illuminated by the furnaces of distant ironworks and coalpits. In the village, with a background of hills, stands the old Priory Church, partly Norman, partly Transition, partly Early English, built of red sandstone of a peculiarly rich hue. As restored by Mr. Butterfield, under the direction of Dr. Parkinson and the present principal, Canon Knowles, it is a noble pile, in spite of the somewhat incongruous conversion of the choir and transepts into lecture-rooms for the use of the College.<sup>1</sup> Near the church is the Priory, now the Principal's residence; the Grammar School, founded by Archbishop Grindal; and the new library, designed by Mr. Butterfield. Together they form a remarkably picturesque and interesting group. The parish was originally of great extent. St. Bees is the mother church of Whitehaven, and it includes in its boundaries detached portions of the wild and exposed districts of Ennerdale, Wastdale, Eskdale, and part of Loweswater. The Principal is incumbent of St.

<sup>1</sup> The transepts have since been restored to the church.

Bees. Writing of the dissolution of the Priory, and of the foundation of the College, Wordsworth says (*Poems of the Imagination*, 1833):—

‘By a mandate given  
Through lawless will the Brotherhood were driven  
Forth from their cells, their ancient house laid low,  
In Reformation’s sweeping overthrow;  
But now once more the local heart revives,  
The unextinguishable spirit strives.  
O may that Power who hushed the stormy seas  
Prosper the new-born college of St. Bees.’

Legend tells that a cell, afterwards developed into a priory, was founded by Begha, an Irish princess, as a fulfilment of a vow of gratitude to God and the saints, for her escape from shipwreck on the dangerous coast. She landed with some of her ladies, and applied for a sale or grant of land to the then feudal lord, a pagan, but whose lady was a devout Christian. The lord of the land scoffingly told her that she should have so much and no more land than would be covered with snow at sunrise the next morning. On the morrow, Midsummer Day, so says the legend, the tops of the hills were white with snow. A miracle was alleged; but, miracle or no miracle, the parts which would have been so covered, had the snow fallen, became the possession of the Priory of St. Bees, and still pay tithes to the lay impropiators.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I myself saw snow fall in a much less likely spot in the month of July.

The first thing a student had to do on his arrival was to report himself to the Principal, who assigned him his lodgings—the men lodged in the village or the immediate neighbourhood ; the next thing was to assemble in the College Hall to hear his inaugural address, which he always gave with a pleasant word and smile of welcome. He was then in his best days, when the troubles about his leaving Manchester were only seething, and had not bubbled up to the surface. In stature he was above the middle size ; his carriage was erect, his step stately and slow, as became a dignitary ; his head was covered with curly brown hair, interspersed with grey ; his features, though not regular in profile, were singularly attractive in full face ; his eyes were sparkling, and twinkled with every passing humour ; he looked you straight in the face, and you felt it impossible to practise any evasion with him ; his voice was full, round, and sonorous, with a perceptible north-country burr on his r's. His reputation as a former lecturer at the College had preceded him, and his appointment was welcomed by the Church at large.

He came to the College at a somewhat critical time, for under his predecessor, the Rev. R. P. Buddicome, a really good and scholarly man, it had fallen almost exclusively under ultra - evangelical influences. Its leading patron was Dr. John Bird Sumner, Bishop of Chester. What understanding

there was between him and the college authorities I do not pretend to know; but certain it is that the men were specially prepared for his examinations. They knew where they would be put on in the Greek Testament, for the passage was always the same—St. Luke iv. 16, *et seq.* His questions were really good, and fairly testing; but the queer thing was that we knew exactly what would be asked, and what would be expected. I was aware of all this, because I had backward men assigned to read up for their examinations. Stranger still, he never varied his course even after he became Primate, as I found out from a young Trinity College, Cambridge, man, whom I put through his facings before he went up to Lambeth or Addington, I forget which.

But Dr. Sumner was a devout, humble-minded man, to whom advanced (!) criticism would have been a horror; and no one could go into his presence without feeling the better for it. He must have had some sense of humour, for I remember him saying, 'Preaching is good exercise, and gives a good appetite. Always take your meal after, and not before, your sermon.' His favourite commentators were Henry and Scott; and he wrote some devotional books on the Gospels, which no one either reads or buys in these days. His *Apostolic Preaching* was really a good book.

He used to require a candidate to read his trial sermon to him as he sat in his chair in his library—rather a trying thing. When Primate of all England, he once said to a nervous man, who was hesitating and clearing his throat, ‘Read on, read on, and fancy that you have got an old woman before you.’ He was very emphatic about domiciliary visitation, and cottage lectures. Speaking of dirty cottages and ill-ventilated rooms, he said, ‘The first thing a young clergyman has to do is to conquer his nose.’ For a curate to have frequented the theatre in his days would have been met with the withdrawal of his licence.

But he never realised the greatness of his position. A friend of mine, whose guest he was, told him of what one of the Popes, I forget which, said of the Archbishop of Canterbury, that he was ‘*Alterius orbis Papas.*’ ‘Ah, indeed!’ said His Grace, but without a shade of interest. He loved plain living, and hated pomp; and his reputation, I think, stood higher at Chester than at Canterbury. On the same visit he said, ‘My stock of wine is so small that my butler is quite ashamed of it. So when any “gentleman’s gentleman” wishes to see my cellar, he hides the nakedness of the land by putting the empty bottles back into their places.’

In my day there were from a hundred to a hundred and twenty men in residence at St. Bees, and they were of a somewhat mixed character. The qualifica-

tion for entrance used to be to be able to read and construe the Greek Testament readily and grammatically at sight; to read and parse a piece of Latin; and you were supposed to try your hand at a Latin theme. Butler, Pearson, Hooker, and Paley were text-books, and you had to pass an examination in *Grotius de Veritate Religionis Christianæ* in the original Latin; and if you were ambitious to stand well, you were expected to cite the Articles and Creeds in Latin, as well as in English. The course is now, I believe, formed on the Cambridge Preliminary. Amongst us there was a sprinkling of men who had belonged to other professions, and who brought to their clerical calling the experience, and practical wisdom, thus gained. Some of them have since attained eminence in various departments of theological and other sciences—the late Canon Raines, for example, as an antiquary; my friend Canon Walter Bell for liturgical research; the late Dr. Alfred Bowen Evans as one of the great London preachers of his day; the Rev. Edmund Fowle as a homilist; the Rev. W. Hobson for composing a Chinese grammar. Some since graduated in arts or divinity, and others have had degrees conferred on them *honoris causâ*, or for their work and writings, by Archbishops of Canterbury. But there was also an influx of Scripture readers, and ex-Dissenting preachers, who did not always quite manage to get

rid of their old idiosyncrasies ; and they worried the Principal not a little by their dogmatism and conceit. I am sure that some of them thought themselves infinitely better qualified to teach him than he was to teach them. They were mostly ultra-Calvinists, and laid claim to inner lights peculiar to the elect. Nothing vexed him more than claims to spurious degrees. In my day there were several men who had graduated M.D. at Edinburgh and Aberdeen and elsewhere, but on the principle, I suppose, that when they studied divinity they should 'throw physic to the dogs,' he would not recognise their diplomas. Some of us—I am afraid I was one of them—petitioned him to get us a distinctive badge, on which he produced a marvellous hood, lined half white and half red. 'Now, gentlemen,' quoth he, 'rival the mathematical precision of Cambridge, and the classical lore of Oxford, and *you will do.*' I am sure he was laughing at us. Mr. French, of Bolton, the well-known robe-maker, made one or two of these strange garments, which went by the name of the 'Harlequin hood.' I knew a man who went up the pulpit with the red side, and came down the pulpit with the white side.

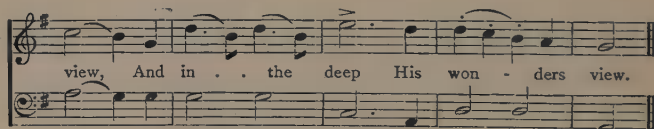
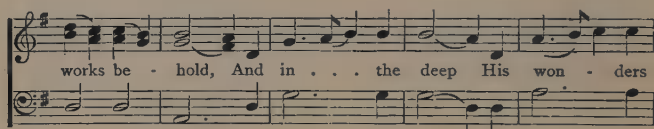
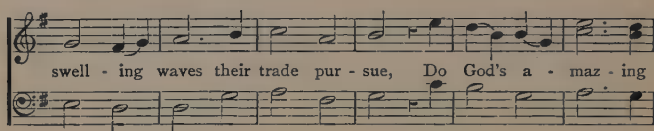
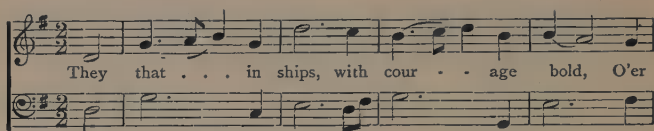
One day, in his Articles lectures, during which the Principal allowed the class to ask questions, usually put with becoming modesty, an ex-preacher thrust into his hand a pamphlet he had published,



directly contradictory of what the Doctor had just been saying. 'Read that, sir,' the author said, 'and you'll see the truth.' The Principal smiled. 'I will read it at my leisure,' he said; then, rising from his chair, 'Perhaps, Mr. So-and-So, you would like to occupy my place?' Some of us were about to cheer the Principal. 'Hush!' he said, lifting up his hand. He then resumed where he had left off, and we badgered the man not a little when the class had broken up, and we were on our way back to our rooms. His discipline was firm and discriminating, and his rebukes, seldom given, were judiciously and kindly administered, and well received. Nothing grieved him more than to have to 'send a man down.' But this rarely happened. On the whole, I think it will be admitted that the men who passed under Dr. Parkinson's care have held their own with their brother clergy, and that they have done good work in their day and generation.

Before its restoration, the Priory Church was filled up with pews, the prayers were read from a reading desk with a pulpit behind it, directly in front of the altar, and the service was a duet between the parson and the clerk. Now there is a stately and reverent service. Old Isaac, the clerk, was a character in his way, and he used to commemorate the breaking up of the College—many of the students travelling by sea—by singing Psalm cvii. to the accompanying tune,

which, with its ups and downs, recalls the tossings of a vessel on the waves :—



No sooner His command is past,  
But forth the dreadful tempest flies,  
Which sweeps the sea with rapid haste,  
And makes the stormy billows rise.

Sometimes the ships toss'd up to heaven,  
On tops of mountain waves appear,  
Then down the steep abyss are driven,  
Whilst every soul dissolves with fear.

Then straight to God's indulgent ear  
They do their mournful cry address,  
Who graciously vouchsafes to hear,  
And frees them from their deep distress.

An old woman, of more than mediæval ugliness and dirt, used to sweep the church and the College. The students nicknamed her 'Sancta Bega,' after the patron saint. Sancta Bega—not the dirty old woman—was a reputed beauty when she arrived at St. Bees. What she looked like after her mediæval austerities we are not told.

Dr. Parkinson had the happy knack of drawing you out, and gaining your confidence, when, all the time, without seeming to do so, he was instructing you. He was a great reader of the Lake Poets, with whom he was personally acquainted. He was also a friend of Archdeacon Evans, whose books, the *Bishopric of Souls* and *The Ministry of the Body*, he used to recommend us to read. He was also a great admirer of Walter Scott. He had his novels read to him during his protracted illness. He was proud of his descent from generations of Lancashire statesmen, or yeomen, as they would be called elsewhere. A near relative says: 'He seldom failed to visit his birthplace once a year, and though circumstances had removed him from the neighbourhood and habits of his early kinsmen and neighbours, he always strove after enjoying these little peeps in his old way. 'Come brother,' he once said, not many years before his last visit, 'these silver spoons are not those we had when you and I went to Chipping School. Let us have the common ones, and some of our old sort of porridge.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Evans' *Old Church Clock*, p. xvi.

This little anecdote was thoroughly characteristic of the simplicity of his character, and how unspoilt he was by prosperity! During one of his Manchester residences, when he and I were sitting alone at dinner, he was full of his old Lancashire and Cumberland memories, and I capped Yorkshire stories with him. Afterwards our conversation turned on poets and poetry, and here he was in his element. He talked of Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, and their surroundings. He thought very highly of Southey, and advised me to read his *Doctor*. He believed him to be an able and trustworthy historian, and he used to award his *Book of the Church* as a prize. My copy has the arms of the College, and his name in it. Keble's *Christian Year* he had off by heart. He won the Seatonian prize poem at Cambridge, and he published a volume of miscellaneous poems. 'What he has given us,' says a competent critic, 'if not of a high order, is distinguished for its graceful simplicity. His songs are crisp and tuneful.'<sup>1</sup>

Here is an example of his north-country 'pluck.' During the construction of the railway between St. Bees and Whitehaven, gangs of Irishmen had been imported, much to the annoyance of the Cumberland navvies. Many angry disputes had arisen, and the issue was about to be tried in a pitched battle. A champion was chosen on either side; crowds were

<sup>1</sup> Mr. J. Evans' *Parkinson's Old Church Clock*, p. xxv.

collected ; the villagers were in a state of alarm ; the two men stripped, and were awaiting the signal to begin, when up walked Dr. Parkinson right into the ring, every one making way for him. In a moment he laid a hand on each of the two men's shoulders. 'Put on your clothes'—this in a tone of authority. 'What's the use of fighting?' Then, seeing that the Irishman was a smaller man than his antagonist, he exclaimed, 'I'm ashamed of you' (to the Cumbrian), 'you, an Englishman, and to fight a little man like that. Tell me who are your leaders, and what your grievances are, and I will bring them before the proper authorities.' Then, addressing the crowd, 'You are all,' he said, 'my parishioners, and if you don't disperse, I'll send you all to prison.' He was a county magistrate. His interference had the desired effect, and the dispute was set right. Many of the students were present in cap and gown. 'Let these "Priest-eves" pass,' said the Cumberland men, making way for us, and so we went on our way without let or hindrance.

The Principal had a hearty laugh at my expense. He had invited me and Mr. C., a brother student, to dine at the Priory. My friend was to call on me at my rooms, which he accordingly did, when lo ! he found me oblivious of the engagement,—it was only about six o'clock,—undressed, and ready to step into bed. I had clean forgotten all about it—all the

stranger, because we justly esteemed it an honour to dine with the Principal. Alas! we arrived a few minutes late, and I had to plead my excuse. Dr. Parkinson laughed heartily, and congratulated me that the dinner was not spoiled. The ladies accused me of being in love, which, perhaps, was true, although I am sure it was not that which led me to forget, for I had been reading hard myself, and coaching others. But, as Dr Parkinson used to say, the celibacy of the clergy was not one of our proclivities.

I have spoken of the way he had of drawing out the confidences of younger men. An ex-student, who shall be nameless, in the fulness of his heart, told him by letter of a misfortune which had befallen the family of the lady to whom he was engaged, in the loss of a fortune, which rendered his matrimonial prospects somewhat dubious. The reply came by return—‘You do well to “behave comely to your virgin”; and, after all, “a dinner of herbs where love is,” is no very indigestible meal.’

Shortly after I had got settled in my curacy, I introduced my wife to him. ‘Ah,’ he said, taking both her hands in his, ‘I knew all about you from your husband, when he was with me at college.’ A day or two after, he called on us, and presently a hamper of old port wine arrived, with a note in the form of a prescription, ‘Two glasses to be taken daily, together with short sermons.—R. P.’

Dr. Parkinson was by far the most popular preacher heard in the Old Church for many a year, although he had no tricks of popularity, no rhetoric, no straining after effect. His sermons were plain, manly addresses, and the only wonder was that, with his graphic powers of description, love of poetry, and sense of humour, none of these qualities came out in his discourses, Two impressions of them I will venture to give, although from two very different men. Principal Knowles says: 'His sermons, somewhat wanting perhaps in force, had a rare speciality, which made them most pleasant and most profitable to me—they showed a fine knowledge of the Old Testament. He spoke, I thought, of the patriarchs, the kings, the law, and the prophets, better and more clearly than any man I had ever heard. And I told him this, and his reply had a great effect on my own work: "Thank you. If you give attention to the Old Testament, you will understand the New."' The other was that of an old member of the cathedral congregation, who lived in Broughton Lane, when it really was a lane: 'Copy your master, sir. Copy the Doctor. He never says a word too many, and he never says a word too few.'

Another of his valued friends was my old acquaintance, Dr. John Boutflower, with whom for some years I dined between services on Sundays. The good medical doctor thought his brother doctor of divinity a model preacher, and with his accurate and retentive

memory could repeat a sermon, which struck him, almost word for word.

Dr. Parkinson was a somewhat prolific writer, although his contributions to literature were made in his earlier days. They comprised university lectures, prize-poem, and sermons, contributions to reviews, antiquarian papers, books edited for the Chetham Society, a volume of miscellaneous poems, and his *Old Church Clock*.

I believe that he himself would have placed his literary, or at any rate his theological, reputation on his *Hulsean Lectures*. But, valuable as they were in their day, he will always be best remembered for his *Old Church Clock*. In this book, which he dashed off *currente calamo*, as a relaxation in his leisure moments, and of which he thought but little, it may well be said, 'He being dead yet speaketh.' 'There is much of the author's own tenderness of disposition running through the pages of the *Old Church Clock*,' says Mr. Evans. 'His own high principles as a Churchman—his love for a primitive and earnest form of worship—his deep devotion to all that is natural and pure, to say nothing of his intense admiration for the charming scenery, and simple-minded people, in whom his story is centred—all tend to give us perhaps a more complete index to his character than can be found in any other of his productions.'



Canon Knowles, who was second master of Archbishop Grindal's school at St. Bees whilst Dr. Parkinson was Principal, says: 'Like many others, I admired him as a dexterous but always courteous disputant, a ready converser, the most hospitable of hosts, the pleasantest of guests. What charmed us in him was in part ephemeral, as the wit of the witty is.' Here is a specimen. Archbishop Thomson's father was, as is well known, a highly-respected tradesman of Whitehaven, who had a garden of some length, leading down to the roadway. When the new Primate was appointed, Dr. Parkinson pointed to this garden as he was passing, and named it 'Long Lawn,' a name it is still known by.

Another of my old friends, the Rev. Canon Woodhouse, formerly lecturer of the College, says: 'As a companion, his easy conversation was full of genial stores and personal memories, which gave a special charm to his intercourse, whether in official deliberation with the College staff, in a rambling walk, for which, in his days of strength, he was ever ready, or at the social table.' And of his general acquirements, 'His tastes lay mostly amongst both the copious divines and literary galaxy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He reckoned Dr. Johnson as a mighty man in politics and morals. His scholarship was drawn more from our English than from ancient classics, and except in short quotations from

what may be called maxims, of which he was particularly fond, he dealt rather in broad general principles, derived from what he had read, than in minutiae of thought.'

Another high authority says: 'His genial and loving disposition, influenced by the same mind which was in his Divine Master, always led him to respect the conscientious scruples of others, and to treat with tenderness those whom he thought were in error. Under his wise and judicious presidency a high theological and classical culture was raised, and the College well sustains its character and usefulness.'

The last time I saw Dr. Parkinson was on the memorable Sunday morning when he was attacked by paralysis. Who, indeed, will ever forget it? In spite of the thickness of his utterance, and to some extent the failure of his sight, he renewed his efforts to conclude his sermon. But it was in vain. The congregation had taken the alarm. My friend and his friend, the Rev. H. H. Westmore, went up the pulpit steps and assisted him down. He was then taken into the chapter-house. I noticed that he tried to smile. Canon Wray said, 'Is it your throat, sir?' 'Paralysis! paralysis!' was the reply, and with that he put out the hand of which he had still the use, and pressed mine most warmly. It came upon us all as a great shock, and on no one more than on myself and

my wife, who, on meeting him in the cathedral yard on our way to church, were struck with the firmness of his walk, and with his dignified and kindly bearing as he shook hands with us. He was attended at the Deanery by Dr. Boutflower, and Dr. Eason Wilkinson, and seemingly rallied for a time. But the fatal stroke had been given, and in less than twelve months he passed away to his rest at the Priory at St. Bees. I was myself invalided at Hastings when the sad tidings reached me, conveyed by a sympathetic letter from Dean Bowers. I felt, indeed, that I had lost a friend—a friend whom I loved and venerated as much as if he had been my own father, which, indeed, in a spiritual sense, he was.

He was laid to rest in the churchyard, amid surroundings which he loved so well. The farmers' sons and young farmers petitioned to do the last office of love, and to carry his beloved remains from the Priory to the grave. The clergy, the collegians, the parishioners, old and young, and the boys of the schools, followed in long procession, and, after the Cumberland use, a psalm was sung in church after the lesson. I wished to be present myself, but was 'let by sickness'; but those who were there spoke of the service as most touching, and of the grief and sense of loss as most keen. There, 'the labourer's task being over,' the good man rests, awaiting the resurrection of the just.

His friend, the late well-known Mr. Charles S. Simms, thus describes the scene—

‘The day is dark and cold with mist and rain;  
The winds are sobbing round thy tower, St. Bees;  
With grief-like murmurs bend the leafless trees;  
And from the troubled and unresting main  
There comes a voice again and yet again,  
Like human sorrow; whilst the conscious vale  
Throbs with the death-song of the bell whose tale  
Makes the wide air an all-surrounding pain.  
True friend, guide, counsellor, oh! fare thee well.  
The unbidden tears will spring, the heart will swell,  
That we shall see thy face on earth no more.  
Yet may we not repine: life’s trial past,  
The good and faithful servant rests at last  
(His task well done) on God’s eternal shore.’

I do not think that I can close these random recollections of a good man, unworthy as I feel them to be of their subject, better than in the words which his old acquaintance, the late Mr. James Crossley, appended to his obituary notice of him—

‘Non totus raptus licet, optime Præses,  
Eriperis; redit os placidum, moresque benigni  
Et venit ante oculos et pectore vivit imago.’

### XIII.

## An Old-fashioned Churchman:

CECIL DANIEL WRAY,

CANON OF MANCHESTER.

OLD Canon Wray—was he ever young?—formed a sort of connecting link between the old and the new order of things. He was born so far back as 1778, and lived on to his eighty-ninth year, doing duty in the Old Church almost to the very last. He had a very vivid memory, and could recall the horrors of the French Revolution, and the dread of invasion; the rise and fall of Buonaparte; the Bread Riots; the Peterloo Massacre, as the rioters called it; the passing of the Reform Bill; the Corn Law agitation; the introduction of railways; and the Chartist Riots. Like many ancient men, he was somewhat of a *laudator temporis acti*, and kept his old convictions and his old prejudices to the end. Yet in his earlier days he anticipated some of the great movements the wisdom of which experience has proved, for he advocated the 'Ten Hours Bill,' and, much as he

disliked platform meetings, he might have been seen at them in company with Lord Shaftesbury, Lord John Manners, and the noted Richard Oastler. And although, I daresay, he would have been satisfied with the three R's, and for boys and girls to be able to read their Bibles, and say their Catechism, he helped, with Dr. Bell, to found the National Schools in Manchester. He likewise urged on Government the need of meeting the spiritual destitution of the large towns. His appeal was referred to in the House of Commons, and the result of the movement was the 'million grant,' and the erection of St. Andrew's Church, Ancoats; St. Matthew's, Campfield; St. George's, Hulme; and St. Philip's, Salford, now attached to the four residentiary stalls.

He was always good to the poor, and aided them in his old-fashioned way, for in 1858 he increased a bequest made by one Jane Corles for dole to be given yearly by the minor canons, originally termed chaplains, at Christmas; and a year before his death he willed a sum of money the interest of which was to purchase good worsted stockings for eight poor men, and eight poor women, usually attending the service at the cathedral, to be called 'Canon Wray's Birthday Gift.' The Old Church is rich in such benefactions with the commemoration of founders, and it is a blessing that they have not been tampered with as they have so often been elsewhere.

Canon Wray was an old-fashioned Churchman; he disliked hymns, evening services, and, above all, extempore preaching. But he undoubtedly was a most venerable-looking ecclesiastic—his figure upright, his hair white, his costume canonical. In church he was a striking object, save when he and his brethren were shut up in glass cases under the choir-screen on Sundays. He looked his best in the Sub-Dean's stall in the choir at the daily services, or in the pulpit, where he could be seen, but not heard. Whatever he was, or was not, he was, to all intents and purposes, a Don—a Don of Dons. He never walked to church, like Dean Bowers, but always drove thither in his roomy carriage and pair, with footmen in dark blue liveries. His salutations of his acquaintances marked the Don. In the chapter-house he bowed to the Dean, and addressed him as 'sir,' extending his full hand to the canons, and two fingers to the noncapitular members; when a curate approached him, he had to be content with one finger. An Irish curate, thinking this the proper English etiquette, thrust out his forefinger in return, with the effect that it looked just as if they were trying to poke each other in the ribs. The old Canon did not take it as a joke at all, and wondered what other people were tittering at. He had a great notion of the differences of rank and position, and he used to say that in his early days it took three things to make a Manchester gentleman—

(1) To belong to the 'Pitt Club ;' (2) to have a pew in the gallery of the Old Church ; (3) to take in the *Times* newspaper. I do not remember ever hearing him perpetrate a joke. He was far too dignified to be humorous. In his way he was given to hospitality. His dinners and his wine were excellent, and three liveried servants used to wait at table. Once a year he invited the neighbouring curates to dinner in turn, and gave them everything of the best. On these occasions he made them a speech, and exhorted them to be thankful for present mercies, and reminded them that although they must not all expect prizes in the Church, they need not remain curates all the days of their lives, for that even the Archbishop of Canterbury was once a curate. The curates, as they glanced round at the good things set before them, and to which no doubt they did ample justice, perhaps thought it rather a mockery of their misery. One day I heard him tell the Dean that he thought four thousand a year a most desirable income, with which any one might be content. 'You have enough,' he said, 'for your necessities and a few luxuries. No man need wish for more.' I thought so too ; so did the Dean.

Another of the old Canon's hospitable ways was to ask the old communicants to a Christmas dinner in the Sunday schools, when they had as much roast beef and plum pudding as they could eat. Year by year he addressed them pretty much in the same



words, reminding them of any one of their number who had died in the course of the last twelve months. He always used to bring a little bottle of brandy to set fire to the pudding, and this the old folk looked at with real, or affected, surprise, just as if it had been a magnificent display of fireworks. He loved, too, to keep up all kinds of old customs. On Good Friday he gave the school children hot cross buns; on Easter Day he saluted us with the words, 'Christ is risen;' to which we all responded, 'He is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.' On his birthday he gave away packages of tea and sugar corresponding with the year of his age. I think he had rather a liking for me, for we had both been curates of Wigan, and subsequently chaplains to the Earls of Crawford and Balcarres. He came to Manchester before the days of transition. He was a contemporary of the noted Joshua Brooks (the 'Rev. Joseph Rivers' of Dr. Parkinson's admirable *Old Church Clock*). Those were the days when marriages were taken wholesale, and children baptized in shoals, and funerals got through as best they could. Every one knows the story of the eccentric chaplain, who, on a young bride exclaiming, 'Eh, Mester Brooks, but yo've married me to th' wrong felley!' replied, 'Sort yourselves as you go out.' Canon Wray was not much of an author. He published a pamphlet on the wearing of the surplice, as a sort of eirenicon to allay

the excitement caused by the appearance of that inoffensive vestment in the pulpit. He printed a few sermons, tracts, and a pamphlet entitled *Some Early Recollections of the Collegiate Church in Manchester*. In this he claims to have baptized more children, and married more couples, than any other clergyman in the Church of England. The exact numbers were—christenings, 32,211; marriages, 13,186; funerals, 9995. Even in my time, I have helped to baptize two hundred children on one Sunday afternoon, and I once married fifty-seven couples in a morning. It was Thursday in Whitsun-week, or Whit-week, as they call it in the North. No doubt it was hard to get through all this duty 'decently and in order,' but it was one of the gravest of that gravest of all mistakes—the Rectory Division Act of 1851—to deprive the parishioners of Manchester of their time-honoured privilege of resorting to their ancient parish church for these ministrations. The feeling of love and veneration for the Old Church was a good and wholesome one, and ought to have been respected. Properly regarded, it was a lay, and not a clerical, matter, and should not have been made a question of fees. I have been told, though I forget on what authority, that immediately on this Act coming into full force, after the death of Mr. Humphrey Nichols, the marriages at the Registry Offices increased at least ten per cent.

People of these days, who see the church brought back to the grace and dignity of the fifteenth century erection, can form no idea of what it was in Canon Wray's time, or even in my own. The choir was happily little altered, but the nave was choked up with galleries rising tier over tier up to the very roof. The choir men and boys sat in the west gallery, underneath the organ, and had to make their way through the crowded passage as best they might. In spite of all architectural impropriety, however, the Old Church presented an impressive spectacle, crowded as it was Sunday by Sunday from one end of the nave to another. It was a remarkably good auditorium, too. Who will ever forget Bishop Wilberforce's preaching one Sunday for the S. P. G.—literally, there was not standing room. I never saw the sacred building fuller, if possible, than when Bishop Lee pronounced his celebrated oration on the death of the Prince Consort.

The most popular service in Canon Wray's day was that held on Sunday afternoons, when there was an anthem as well as a sermon. The now well-attended evening service was not then begun. That was introduced by the Rev. H. H. Westmore, and Mr. Herbert Birley, then churchwarden, with the sanction of Dean Bowers, and against the protest of Canon Wray. It was originally held in the Derby Chapel, and I am not sure whether my dear old Dean or

I myself preached the first sermon there ; it was one or the other of us. One day Canon Wray religiously kept up, and that was the fifth of November. I heard the old gentleman announce it thus—‘Wednesday next, being the Popish Conspiracy (*sic*), is appointed by the Church to be kept holy.’ But I kept away when I dared, for I never relished the strong language of the service, nor had I any love for Dutch William, in spite of Lord Macaulay. So one fifth of November who should I meet but Dean Bowers strolling in Peel Park. I raised my hat. The Dean returned the salute. Then I ventured to say, ‘Mr. Dean, you are not at service to day.’

‘Mr. Clerk in Orders,’ he replied, ‘neither are you.’

‘I always have a cold on the fifth of November,’ I added, clearing my throat.

‘So have I,’ responded the Dean, clearing *his* throat.

And so we parted, but not in the direction of the Old Church. The following morning, however, the old Canon remonstrated with me for my neglect of duty ; but aside the Dean gave me a wink, whilst regaling himself with a pinch of snuff.

Nothing could mark the changes in people’s habits more than the time the early service used to be held. The bell tolled at five A.M., then at half-past five till six, when between two and three hundred people came. It consisted of the Litany and sermon, and the choir boys used to be present, but there was no

celebration. The first early celebration was introduced in the Derby Chapel at 8 A.M. by the Rev. H. H. Westmore, who did more than any of the cathedral clergy of the day to kindle and sustain the spiritual life of the congregation. To him, too, and to the Rev. J. M. Elvy, they are indebted for the commencement of the Mission work, of which the 'Old Church' was made the centre. The early weekly and bi-weekly celebrations are now held in the Lady or Chetham Chapel at 7.30, but this by the way.

Some people considered Canon Wray a good reader, in spite of his north-country accent, which, I dare say, the Manchester folk did not dislike. I always thought he read the Holy Scriptures too much as if he were reading a newspaper. His rendering of St. John i. 19 *et seq.*, was graphic, if a little peculiar, for he gave the dialogue between the deputation from the Sanhedrin and St. John the Baptist just as if the parties concerned were asking impertinent questions, and receiving a snubbing for their answers. He was no orator at the best of times, even when he could be heard. One day, as I was going out of church, some leading gentlemen of the congregation complained to me that they had not heard a word of the sermon, and asked what was the use of going to church? 'Ah,' I said, thinking of the Horatian maxim, 'cannot you learn something from the use of your eyes as well as your ears? He is the sermon.

Look at him. I see temperance in his eyes, soberness in his nose, and chastity in his mouth. If you don't practise those cardinal virtues, where will you be, I should like to ask, at fourscore years and eight?' Like many clergymen of those days, he used to preach his sermons over and over again, on the principle, I suppose, that you cannot have too much of a good thing. There was a member of the congregation who used to take notes of all the texts and sermons preached in the Old Church for upwards of forty years. It was rather a tiresome practice, but one day I found it useful, for I had forgotten to endorse a manuscript which I wanted to preach again. I went to my friend Mr. Charlesworth (that was the gentleman's name), and he referred to his memorandum-book, and told me the date, text, and subject matter of my discourse. I looked over Canon Wray's shoulder one day as he was endorsing his sermon. He had got quite to the bottom of the page; the first date was 1803, the last 1863.

I am sure that old Canon Wray was a good man. His life was consistent and blameless; he performed his duties regularly and punctually; he loved the Old Church, its worship, its people, its customs. He never missed the Sunday school, and there are numerous records of the faithfulness and usefulness of his teaching. Many who subsequently got up in the world, and became men of note in their day and generation,

attributed their subsequent success to the sound, practical Christian principles that he instilled into their minds. Notably was this the case with an ancient member of the congregation, Mr. William Andrew, brother of the well-known parish clerk, Mr. Charles Andrew, who went to the expense of paving the choir with encaustic tiles in commemoration of his old teacher's fifty years' incumbency, and also presented the east window, at that time the best in the church.<sup>1</sup> Those polished tiles were rather a cause of anxiety to me and the Dean, for we were in constant dread of the old gentleman slipping on them. For some time before his death, Canon Wray walked with his arm in that of the chief verger.

The good old Canon's illness and death were touching and pathetic. He attended church as long as he could, and the very last time he drove out in his carriage, it was to a spot in Cheetham Hill, near where he lived, where he could see the Old Church in the distance. Like my namesake, the first Warden, he could have said, *Domine dilexi decorum domûs tuæ et locum habitationis gloriæ tuæ*, which is rendered in the Prayer-Book version, 'Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth.'

He died seated in his chair in his full clerical dress, with his long white hair carefully dressed. The

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, William Andrew.

cathedral clergy went in turn to receive his blessing. He pronounced it, laying his hands on our heads and whilst we knelt before him. We were followed by the lay officials, the last of whom was the verger on whose arm he had leaned, and who had carried the chapter mace before him for so many years. Wray's voice was strong, and he had his faculties to the last. We all followed him to his rest in the old churchyard, the last ever buried there. The Bishop, the dignitaries, the other clergy, and all the staff, to the youngest choir boy, were present. There may have been more active men, men guided by newer lights and following newer devices, but the subject of my short memoir holds a deep place in my recollections, and I shall always think of him, as many who knew him spoke of him, as 'Good Old Canon Wray.'



#### XIV.

### AN Odd Minor Canon:

W. W. JOHNSON,

MINOR CANON OF MANCHESTER.

THE Reverend Wilbraham William Johnson was as much a fixture as the oak stalls, and you could hardly picture the Old Church without him. He was a tall, broad-shouldered man, with a ruddy complexion, and grey hair, which had once been of a reddish hue. He walked with a stiff-kneed gait, the naughtier choir boys knew well how to imitate, and in reading jerked out his sentences, timed to the way he drew in his breath. He used to contend that the choir services were not intended for the laity, and he assured me that he never enjoyed them so much as he did one very wet day, when he and the Dean, and the lay clerks and choristers, had it all to themselves. He was a good mathematician, and fond of natural science, which he showed by flying electric kites during thunderstorms, rather a plucky thing, as

he was constitutionally timid. He spent his days between the Cathedral and the Portico and Chetham Libraries, with an occasional walk out into the country, when he chose the Chat Moss for the salubrity of the air. He was somewhat of a hypochondriac, and had a morbid dread of catching cold. One snowy day, when the streets were a mass of sludge, he walked into the chapter-house, presenting the strange spectacle of his boots tied over the soles and upper leathers with wisps of straw. How he managed to walk I could not make out. But this was more than Canon Wray could stand, so, staring over his spectacles at Johnson's understandings, he asked him if he thought such a strange appearance was fit for the house of God. Johnson replied with warmth, that there was nothing unbecoming. 'It is, sir,' he said, 'to keep my feet warm.' Canon Wray asked if there were no cabs to be got for the hiring. Johnson was a bit put out, but it ended in his hiring a coach, and in his taking me back with him to dinner. To avoid the trouble of getting out his purse, he used to wrap up shillings and sixpences in a narrow strip of paper folded like a schoolboy's cracker, which he kept ready in his waistcoat pocket, and so contrived that he could nip off a bit of the paper that had the exact sum in it. A cabman once pleaded that he was entitled to a trifle more for the badness of the roads, to which Johnson replied, 'If they had not been so

bad, I should not have taken your coach.' On a dark Sunday afternoon, as the procession of clergy and choristers passed from the nave into the choir, Johnson was caught napping, not in his stall, but in a snug corner, where he had ensconced himself to avoid the draughts. He was the only occupant, and had coaxed the vergers to lower the lights; when they were put up again, there he was wrapped up in a green plaid shawl over his surplice. Canon Clifton jokingly asked him if he had been wearing a chasuble.

The doctors told him that he ought to provide himself with something to eat between his meals. So he used to bring a little packet of biscuits, which he stowed away in his crib. But the mice—poor as church mice proverbially are—found out his store, bit their way into the crib, ate the biscuits, or what was left of them, and, growing bolder by impunity, and unconscious of sacrilege, nibbled away at his surplices, hung up there, for the sake of the starch.

This dread of catching cold sometimes led to ludicrous scenes. I walked into the church once when he was taking the baptisms. There stood Mr. Watkins, the vergers, with his official wand, and tittering with suppressed mirth. 'What's the matter?' quoth I. 'Look at the font,' quoth he, pointing with his staff. I looked, and lo! the font was steaming. 'You see, sir,' said the vergers, by way of explanation, 'Mr. Johnson made me team a kettle of hot water in.'

'How considerate for the babies!' I ejaculated. 'Babies, sir? babies? It isn't the babies. It's to keep his fingers from feeling cold.' Talking of babies—the worthy chaplain must have christened many thousands in his day, and yet he never could get over his bachelor-like repugnance to seeing them taking their natural food, which will sometimes happen, or the squalling would have been like a dog-kennel, for when one babe starts crying, the others are sure to follow suit. So a happy thought struck him. He had seen an advertisement for cheap syphonias, and he tendered me a guinea to invest in them, it never having occurred to him that they would be of no use without a supply of milk.

It chanced one day that some strangers were going through one of the narrow streets, since demolished, then surrounding the Old Church, when their attention was arrested by a voice seemingly coming from the clouds. On looking up, a pair of hands were discovered holding a book out of a window three or four storeys high. It turned out to be Mr. Johnson, reading the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, to escape infection.

My old friend disliked innovations, and would be called by the older title of 'Chaplain,' instead of 'Minor Canon,' and never spoke of the Cathedral except as the 'Old Church.' He hated 'restorations' as much as any 'Society for the Preservation of

Ancient Monuments'; protested against everything done to the fabric within and without, and, above all, to its being renewed in freestone, instead of the original red sandstone. Here I think he was right. 'Come along, my dear sir,' he remonstrated one day, when I was stopping to look at the progress of the new works; 'they are japanning it. It is all Brummagem work. I can't bear to think of it.' But, with all his eccentricities, he led a blameless life, and did his duties punctually. He was a man of letters, and it ought to be said, in extenuation of his queer ways, that subsequent symptoms proved his health to have been more impaired than his general appearance would have led one to suppose.

XV.

A Batch of Old Church  
Worthies:

GEORGE PILKINGTON—WILLIAM ANDREW—  
HUMPHREY NICHOLS—CHARLES ANDREW  
—DR. JOHN BOUTFLOWER.

HOW different the surroundings of the Old Church must have looked in the beginning of the fifteenth century from what they were when I first knew Manchester, and from what they are now. The population was less than a twentieth. You might have got on the top of the tower, supposing you were alive in that early period, and as far as your eye could reach, there would have extended before you a landscape of green fields, hills and dales, studded with the picturesque mansions, manor-houses, and moated granges of the aristocratic owners whose memories are handed down in the well-known localities of Ancoats, Ardwick, and Strangeways Halls, all standing within a very few years, and in such street lore as Derby, Stanley, and Mosley Streets, and

Smedley Lane. Manchester, too, has commemorated its benefactors in more recent times in such names as Byrom Street, John Dalton Street, etc. etc. From the summit of the church tower might have been traced the windings of the now inky rivers, the Irwell, the Irk, and the Medlock, then noted trout streams. The suburbs still show their originally rural character in such derivations as Withington, where withes or willows grew on the banks of the streams, and were plaited into baskets, in which the good folk of the day took their butter and eggs to Shudehill market; and Rusholme, where the town's people went out to gather the rushes wherewith to straw their floors. Withy Grove and Withy Bush tell the same tale. Dean's Gate, now widened into a magnificent thoroughfare,—not called after the Deans, but the Danes—literally the Dane's Gate,—was then a mean street with its Knott or Knut's (Canute) Mill at one extremity. Market Lane, now Market Street, said to be one of the best lighted thoroughfares in the kingdom, if not in all Europe, was then and till comparatively lately a badly paved and uneven road, in fact, a rocky ravine, dangerous to conveyances of all kinds, to say nothing of pedestrians. People came into town bringing their goods on pack-horses. Closely abutting on the spacious churchyard had gradually grown up a labyrinth of narrow streets, with picturesque houses partly built of wood and partly of stone and plaster,

one or two of which are, or were a short time ago, still standing, and the like of which may be seen at Chester and Tewkesbury and Stratford-on-Avon. No doubt the Old Church itself looked all the more stately because there were no big warehouses and tall chimneys to dwarf it by comparison, and no smoke to blacken its beautiful carvings and its stately pinnacles.

On one side, too, were the Collegiate Buildings, the official residences of the Warden and Fellows. They are well worth a visit, both for their quaint beauty and for their associations past and present, and also because from the College yard you get by far the best views of the Old Church; for there you see its entire length, with its beautifully-proportioned tower at the west, its long range of perpendicular windows and clerestories, surmounted by battlements of open stonework, and at the east the Chetham or Lady Chapel. There, too, you hear its musical chimes, and the solemn sound of the clock proclaiming the flight of time, and the bell summoning worshippers to the daily service. You feel as secluded there as if Manchester were a hundred miles away. The College, as it seems always to have been called, remained in the hands of the Warden and Fellows till the dissolution of the Collegiate Chapter in 1547, when it was granted to the Earls of Derby, who occasionally used it as a town house, but it was never



restored to its original uses, although it seems that the Earl of Derby of King James the First's day allowed Dr. Dee, the Warden, noted as an astrologer, and, as some say, a conjurer, the use of it. In the room now known as the Audit Room he is said to have entertained Sir Walter Raleigh. During the Commonwealth the buildings were used as a powder-magazine.

But better days were in store, for by the munificence of Humphrey Chetham—about whom I shall have a word or two to say presently—they were purchased by the feoffees under his will from the celebrated Charlotte Tremouille, for the purposes of a college and hospital for boys and for a library. It is curious to note that on a valuation at the time, the buildings were valued at £5210, 10s. 8d., the site at £100. What a difference now, when, save from an antiquarian point of view, the building would fetch but little and the site untold thousands!

They still look much as they must have looked in bygone days, save that their long low range of hall and cloisters and dormitories are towered over by the tall, unsightly Palatine Buildings, and by the scarcely less ugly additions to the Grammar School.

Humphrey Chetham was a Manchester manufacturer, and a Royalist. In 1635 he was made High Sheriff, and had to collect ship-money, much against his will. He was a bachelor, and in a somewhat eccentric way took compassion on poor boys, whom

he educated during his lifetime, and for whose benefit after his death, he demised houses, lands, and moneys with which he endowed his hospital and library—the first free library in the kingdom. Here, whilst steam-engines are whistling and trains rumbling, the student may retire from the din and bustle of the great city, and muse on the changes which have come over men and manners, and consult ancient tomes in rooms where the light is shaded by painted windows, and the walls and roofs panelled with black oak. Here, too, many a lad has been trained to be a good Churchman, and a good citizen; for in Master Humphrey Chetham's eyes the two were identical. So, by his will, the boys must be able to read their Bibles and to say their catechisms, and be recommended by their clergymen, before they could be admitted; and when once in the College, they are bound to keep to the Church's rules, and to go in procession to the Old Church on Sundays and saints' days, in their quaint dresses, headed by their Governor in the full dignity of a laced gown, carrying his mace.

Years ago, there might have been seen in the choir an orphan boy named GEORGE PILKINGTON, and years after that, he occupied a pew in the gallery as one of Manchester's most worthy merchants. Those who were in his secrets knew that he attributed his success to the training he had in the College. So

as George Pilkington sat listening to a sermon one Founder's Day, he resolved to lay aside his earliest savings to commemorate his benefactor. And there the monument stands, a full-length marble figure of Humphrey Chetham, the likeness taken from the only extant portrait of him in the College. On the base is the figure of a College boy in his quaint dress. It is thus inscribed—

Humfredo Chetham Hospitii et  
Bibliothecæ Fundatori DD.  
Gratus Alumnus MDCCCLIII.

He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth  
life, righteousness, and honour.—PROV. xxi. 21.

Upon the book held open by the College boy  
seated on the pedestal—

He hath dispersed abroad, and given to the poor; his  
righteousness remaineth for ever.—Ps. cxii. 9.

His name appears in Mrs. Linnæus Banks' *Manchester Man*. Dr. Parkinson, in his *Old Church Clock*, speaks of him as 'a faithful member of the Old Church congregation,' and says: 'Providence has blessed his labours, and changed his means, but not his habits. He is never absent from his church, and has never altered his dress.' When I first knew him he must have been in the fifties. I can recall him as he sat in his pew in the north gallery, and as he stood up at the saying of the

'Form of Bidding Prayer,' in which he specially delighted, on account of its recital of the style and title of the Sovereign, and the great officers in Church and State. He was a well-grown man, with an upright carriage, and with a singularly pleasant and open countenance. He had a keen sense of humour, could tell a good story and relish a good joke; he was withal an earnest, humble-minded Christian and Churchman, of a type, I venture to think, produceable only in the Old Church. He was very hospitable, and used frequently to ask me to go to his office, and drive with him in his brougham to high tea at his house in Whalley Range. Before starting home at night he always opened a pint bottle of champagne, which he called 'slaying a baby.'

I called on him for a subscription for some object, which had no claim on him whatever. He handed me a bank-note, saying jokingly, 'What change will you give me out of that?' 'None,' I said. 'Well he replied, with an affected sigh, 'I suppose you must have it; but please to bear in mind, that this is the fifth five-pound note I have given away this morning, and it isn't quite twelve o'clock.'

As Providence continued to bless him, his heart and purse were all the more freely opened. Three windows marked his reverence for the sanctuary, and 'Pilkington's Charity,' left by him for the benefit of the poor, are enduring tokens of his munificence.

And the way he shaped his benefaction was characteristic ; for the funds were to be invested, and laid out in clothes and blankets, to be given away on the anniversary of his birthday by the churchwardens and minor canons, in the Old Church itself, after a sermon had been preached, for which service a proper honorarium was to be given. Then the distributors were to dine together at the expense of the trust, but there was to be no extravagance and no expensive wines, but only a modicum of port and sherry. So year by year 'George Pilkington's Day' is observed. May his pious intentions never be frustrated.<sup>1</sup>

Like his friend Pilkington, Mr. WILLIAM ANDREW rose by his integrity and perseverance from a comparatively low position. I have often heard him say that he attributed his success in life to what he learnt in the Sunday school under Canon Wray, when clerk in orders. In fact, like a good many poor boys, the education he got was obtained there, for reading and writing used to be taught on Sundays, so few then were the day schools. But he tried to improve himself, and his spare evenings found him at the more recently-instituted night classes. So, like his old friend, his thoughts were full of gratitude to the divine Providence which shaped his destiny, and to the venerable clergyman who had been the instructor and guide of his youth.

<sup>1</sup> See *Temple Bar*, January 1887.

This 'duteous care' he showed by presenting the east window of the choir, to my thinking one of the best in the cathedral; by a donation of £500 to the rebuilding of the tower; and his sense of his benefactor's care, by paving the choir with encaustic tiles, as a memorial of the fiftieth year of the aged Canon's connection with the church. As long as health and strength permitted, he never changed his habits; lived frugally, though hospitable to all his friends, and especially to the clergy; worked hard, did not waste a penny, was at his dyeworks by six in the morning, and stayed there till six in the evening. He never missed the Sunday school as scholar, teacher, and superintendent; attended church morning and afternoon, as well as the early Litany service, which was then held at six o'clock. Such habits as Mr. Pilkington's and Mr. Andrew's certainly shame the self-indulgence of our times. Then he always found time to be at the missionary meetings held in the schools, where he made speeches in his own graphic style. Here is a specimen: 'Now, you little boys and gels (girls), and you young men and maidens, sit you still on them benches and hearken, and mayhap you'll hear something to your advantage. I can call to mind when Broughton Lane and Bury Road were all in the country, with hedges covered with May blossoms, and where thrushes and black-birds sang. Now, one day there was a young couple

who were keeping company, but who hadn't made up their minds what to say to each other. So the young man said to the young woman, "What's that bird saying?" "Nay," said she, "I can't tell." "Well, then," says he, "I'll tell you—How I love you! How I love you!"' (imitating the sound of a thrush). 'Then they went on a little farther, and the girl says, "What's that blackbird singing?" "I don't know," says he. "Well," says she, "I'll tell you—Show it! Show it!"' (Mr. Andrew again whistling the note). 'So you see they made it up and got wed. Now, if you love Society for Propagation of Gospel' (he seldom used the definite article), "show it, show it," by what you put into them plates when collection is made.' His illustrations and arguments were unanswerable, and the collection was a very good one.

Mr. Andrew's matrimonial experiences were somewhat extensive, for he was married four times, and I daresay he would have had as many wives as the British Blue Beard had he survived his last venture. But he was no Blue Beard, but a kind and good husband, only stipulating, amongst other old-fashioned ways, that his wife should get up at four o'clock every morning to make his breakfast before he went to his works. I was at the funeral of his second wife, and at the wedding of his third; his fourth 'pardner,' as he called her, survived him. It was before 'funeral reform' was thought of, and when respect for the 'dear

departed' took the form of mutes and mourning coaches and burying cakes and hatbands and scarves and gloves, hardly more expensive, and much more useful than the modern wreaths of exotics and hot-house flowers. Well, the clergy were asked, and Mr. George Pilkington, and the doctor, and the apothecary, and the undertaker, and relatives, and friends and neighbours innumerable, enough to fill twenty mourning coaches, to say nothing of private carriages, when we all drove off to Birch Church, where the grave was, and then we came back to a banquet given with the utmost profusion. And when we had eaten and drunk of the best, dear old William Andrew, after heaving a sigh, delivered himself thus: 'Friends all, I'm not one of them as frets after them that's gone if it pleases the Lord to take 'em. He knows best, and I thank the Almighty that she as is gone has lacked for nothing. (Sigh.) Now, if she's cost me a penny in her illness she's cost me five hundred pound—there's the doctor and the apothecary as can testify, if they've a mind, for they've got what I've paid 'em in their pockets; and there's the undertaker, who can tell you what's the cost of coffin and dues, and all paid; and, if she'd cost me all my fortun', she'd ha' had it and welcome. The only reflection as might be cast on me is that I haven't buried her in lead (sigh); but when my time comes, if I'm laid in as good an oak coffin as her that is gone is laid in, I shall have



every reason to be thankful.' Then (sigh) waving his hand over the viands and filling his glass, he exclaimed, 'Reach to, friends, reach to'; and with just a little more hilarity than is usual on such lugubrious occasions, we fell to and did justice to what was provided; the oil portrait of the full-busted departed looking at us with folded arms from over the mantelpiece. Later on Mr. Andrew sent all his guests who were unprovided with carriages home in hired coaches.

Such grief as Mr. Andrew's is not usually very lasting or consuming, so we were none of us much surprised that, when a twelve months had passed away, about the same party was asked to celebrate his nuptials with his third wife. The wedding, of course, took place at the cathedral. George Pilkington gave the bride away—a buxom widow of a suitable age, and without encumbrances. A feast was given at the Angel Hotel, in Market Street, then kept by a Mr. Jonathan Crowther, another Old Church worthy, Toasts were drunk, healths proposed, and speeches made. In his speech, George Pilkington offered to bestow on the happy pair a flitch of bacon, on its being duly earned after a year and a day should elapse, in Dunmow fashion. I daresay we thought nothing more of it, when lo! on the day indicated, came an invitation to see the flitch given away. For the fun of the thing, a court of inquiry was instituted, with Canon Wray as judge. A jury was empanelled,

Westmore and I were engaged as counsel on either side, evidence was taken, the verdict was given, and the flitch was unanimously declared to have been duly earned. Then it was produced, George Pilkington having brought it in his carriage, and old Canon Wray awarded it. Then the bacon was cut up into substantial slices, to be distributed among the guests to take home with them. And this was the way these merry old-world gentlemen helped to make themselves and their friends happy. I doubt if any other generation, or any other place but Manchester, or any other church but the Old Church, could have produced their like.

A few people now living can remember Mr. HUMPHREY NICHOLS, the old parish clerk. You might have seen him some years ago, shabbily dressed, with an old-fashioned 'Spencer' on, threading his way amongst the costermongers of Shudehill, haggling with them about an extra halfpenny in his small purchases of meat and vegetables, which he always carried home for himself in a cotton pocket handkerchief. And you 'would have been surprised' to hear that he was one of the most munificent of men; and, saving as he was of bits of packthread and candle ends, he would often put a bank-note in an old envelope, leave it at the house of some needy person, and not even wait for an acknowledgment. His favourite charities were the Manchester Infirmary, towards which he gave away fifteen thousand pounds, and the

Fund for the Widows and Orphans of the Clergy of the two dioceses of Chester and Manchester, to which he gave seven thousand pounds. The way he did so was extraordinary and characteristic. One day, when he was in his eighty-second year, he called at the office of the Treasurer of the Infirmary, and on finding that official out, he took up a scrap of paper lying on the desk, and, standing by it, wrote: 'H. Nichols will be obliged if Mr. Shelmerdine will be at H. N.'s office to-morrow (Friday) morning, by ten o'clock, on urgent business.' At the time appointed the Treasurer found the old gentleman sitting in his office without a fire, with his overcoat on for warmth. He excused himself for not having a fire on such an inclement morning, alleging that he was shortly going out, and that his business would not take long. He then presented a slip of paper, four inches by two, as follows: '10 notes of £500 each; 9 of £100 each; 3 of £50 each; 23 of £20; 21 of £10; 42 of £5; sovereigns=70; in all £7000.' The bank-notes were all spread straight out, and placed between the covers of an old book out of which the leaves had been torn, tied round with a piece of old cotton tape, and handed over without receipt or acknowledgment.

'The following morning he put himself in the train for Warrington, and presented himself at the door of the rectory just as the rector (the Hon. H. Powys, afterwards Bishop of Sodor and Man) was going down

to dinner with his guests. The footman would not admit the old gentleman within the lobby, and was about to tell him to go round to the back door, when the rector caught sight of him, and asked him his business. That was soon told; he had come to give a trifle of money to the fund for the widows and orphans of the clergy. On being asked into the study, a shabby old pocket-book was produced, and a bank-note—a very dirty one—laid on the table. The rector took it up, thinking it a five-pound note.

“Have you looked at it?” said Mr. Nichols.

“Yes,” said the rector.

“Look again.” The rector could not believe his eyes; it was for £500.

“Perhaps,” said the old gentleman, “I’m keeping those fine folks waiting for their dinner; but if you are not tired of counting, I am not tired of giving.” So the upshot of it all was, that he put £7000 down, but not without a sly hit at his reception. “Tell that fine gentleman of yours,” he said, meaning the footman, “to be civil to an old man, even if he should happen to wear a shabby coat.”

Mr. Powys asked him to stay to dinner. “Dinner? Why, I ate my mutton chop before I started from Manchester. What would your lords and ladies say to sitting beside a shabby old fellow like me?”<sup>1</sup>

One never meets with those ancient parish clerks

<sup>1</sup> *Temple Bar*, January 1887.

in these innovating days. Yet in times gone by, the Old Church would not have been itself without the presence, at all weddings and christenings, of Mr. CHARLES ANDREW, brother of Mr. William Andrew, whose tall figure, impressive demeanour, and sonorous voice were not without their effect on the assembled crowds. Like his brother, his matrimonial experiences were not limited to one choice; but I will dismiss him with the following appropriate lines, although I do not quite know for whom they were originally composed—

‘ The life of this clerk was near threescore and ten,  
Fully half of which time he sung out “Amen”;  
In his youth he was married, like other young men,  
But his wife died one day, so he chanted “Amen.”  
A second he took; she departed—what then?  
He married a third time, again with “Amen.”  
Thus his share in life’s joys was treble, but then  
His voice was deep bass as he sung out “Amen.”  
And here in this grave he rests, till again  
The trumpet shall raise him to sing out “Amen.”’

I must now speak of one more layman, last, but not least in my estimation and that of all who had the privilege of knowing him—my good friend and Dr. Parkinson’s old friend, Dr. JOHN BOUTFLOWER. I can recall him as he sat with his then young family in his pew in the gallery, not far from George Pilkington. In the acute and prominent character of his features he was not unlike in profile Cardinal Newman, and he had no dislike to be told of this resemblance. But

there was a sobriquet which I believe I was responsible for giving him, and by which he was well known, and that was 'Genuine John.' This little impertinence, so generally suggestive of his upright and straightforward character, he never resented; and it is characteristic of the tenacity of his memory, and his regard for his friends, that the very last time I saw him, then in his ninety-first year, I greeted him with the old appellation, and was met by his outstretched hand, and a greeting the warmth of which age had not diminished, with an invitation to stay and dine. But it was only the poor and necessitous who could really appreciate the beneficence of this worthy man, a 'beloved physician' indeed, whose memory will never be forgotten. He was the survivor of all my original friends; a sterling good man, a humble Christian, and an exemplary Churchman, after the fashion of those bygone days.

Times have changed, and we have changed with them, for 'the fashion of this world passeth away.' The fabric of the Old Church has been altered, in accordance with the better taste of our better informed age, and more in conformity with the design of its original founders; but there it stands, as it stood for centuries, as Bishop Alexander so beautifully puts it—'a type of that spiritual church which shall last for ever; for still above the smoke and storm, above the din of noisy streets, above things which are fair and beautiful,

and things which are base and mean, above the selfish multitude, whose motto is to cheat and be cheated, and the scenes of honest English industry, above the joys and sorrows of this life—the Cathedral rises into purer air and points to the heavens above.’<sup>1</sup>

Whether the poet Bishop had the Old Church in his mind when he penned these beautiful lines, who can tell? But of no ancient fane could they have been more truly said, and I avow my conviction that its bell sounding over the deserts of streets and mountains of chimney-stacks for daily prayers; its stately but congregational Sunday services, free and open to rich and poor alike; its Collegiate Chapter, have done more to form the character of Manchester Churchmen than any cause or all causes put together.

And if it is not desirable, even if possible, to reproduce the surroundings amidst which those ancient men, whom I have attempted to describe, became the people they were, it will do us no harm to revive their memories and to imitate their virtues, their patience, their perseverance, their simple living, their loyalty, even if we miss a few eccentricities and peculiarities to which distance of time lends a sort of enchantment. For myself, I can only say, and I hope for my readers too, that it has been a real though melancholy pleasure to put on record these ‘Random Recollections.’

<sup>1</sup> *Witness of the Psalms*, p. 223.

## INDEX.

- ABERGWILI PALACE, 79.  
 — Bishop Thirlwall's life in, 80-85.  
 — Bishop Wilberforce's visit, 101.  
 — Carlyle's visit, 80, 81.  
 — Library, 81, 85.  
 Abraham, Bishop, 197.  
 Allen, Archdeacon, 180-197.  
 Allen, Charles, 193.  
 Allen, Dean, 181, 187.  
 Allon, Rev. Dr., 245.  
 Andrew, Charles, 315.  
 Andrew, William, 307-312.  
 Anson, Archdeacon, 64, 179.  
 Appleyard, Rev. W., 175, 176.  
*Archbishops, Lives of*, 171, 174  
 (Hook's).  
 Arnold, Dr., 10, 33.  
 Atlay, Bishop, 175.  
  
 BAKER, Sir Henry, 238.  
 Baring, Bishop, 241.  
 Beaconsfield, Lord, 242.  
 Bedford Gaol, a future Dean's ex-  
 periences in, 254, 255.  
 Beamont, Rev. W., 112.  
 Begha, Sancta, legend of, 265.  
 Bell, Canon Walter, 269.  
 Benson, Archbishop, 18, 19, 22.  
 Birkett, Rev. G. W., 107-128.  
 Birkett, Rev. Joseph, 109.  
 Birley, Canon Robert, 42, 64.  
 Birley, Herbert, 289.  
 Birley, Messrs., 40, 42.  
  
 Birmingham, King Edward's School,  
 10, 11.  
 — Bishop Westcott's visit, 22-26.  
 — Great scholars at, 19-22.  
 Blunt, Professor J. J., 123.  
 Boswell, James, 65.  
 Boutflower, Dr. John, 277, 315, 316.  
 Bowers, Dean, 251-262.  
 Brick, a regular, 179.  
 Bromby, Vicar, 228-230.  
 Brooks, Rev. Joshua, 287.  
 Buckland, Frank, 148.  
 Buddicombe, Rev. R. P., 266.  
 Bull, Bishop, 14-15.  
 Butler's *Analogy*, 23.  
  
 CAIRNS, Lord, 77.  
 Cambridge Camden Society, 217,  
 219.  
 Carlisle, Bishop of, 233.  
 Carlyle, 77, 80, 81.  
 Charles I., Anagram of, 122.  
 — Charter of, 250.  
 Chaucer, 197.  
 Chetham College, 302-303.  
 Chetham, Humphrey, 303-305.  
 Chichester, Bishop of, 26.  
 Church, Dean, 173.  
 Churton, Rev. H. B. W., 136.  
 Clark, Archdeacon, 90.  
 Collier and Bishop, 50-52.  
 Cowie, Dean, 44, 262.  
 Crossley, James, 282.



Cust, Dean, 75.

DEE, Dr., 303.

Denison, Archdeacon, 68, 69, 192.

Devil's last throw, 145.

Dewes, Dr., 18.

Dickens, Charles, 190.

Diggle, J. W., 39, 44, 46.

Doctor, the Oldfield Lane, 53, 54.

Durham Cathedral, 120.

— Dean and Chapter, 236.

— Scene in, 110, 111.

Dykes, Dr. J. B., 119, 224-248.

Dykes, Rev. Thomas, 225-227.

EAST GRINSTEAD, 198.

— Sackville College, 198-200,  
202.

— Sisters, 209-214.

*Ecclesiologist*, 219.

Ellicott, Bishop, 121.

Elvy, Minor Canon, 291.

Emery, Archdeacon, 65.

Erasmus, 172.

Ethelston, Rev. Hart, 32.

Evans, Archdeacon R. W., 111,  
273.

Evans, Canon, 19, 20, 36.

Evans J., 273, 274.

FABER, Father, 110.

Farrar, Archdeacon, 121.

Florence, St., 107.

— Vale and village, 107-109.

Fowle, Rev. Edmund, 269.

Foxe's Book of Martyrs for chil-  
dren's recreation, 136.

Fraser, Bishop, 37-57.

Freeman, E. A., 172.

GLADSTONE, W. E., 38, 121, 173,  
174, 177.

Greville's Memoirs, 160.

Grier, Prebendary, 180.

HATHERLY, Lord, 177.

Herbert, Dean, 252.

Herbert, George, 116, 190.

Herodias dancing before Herod,  
142.

Hobson, Rev. W., 269.

Homer, Lord Derby's and Mr.  
Gladstone's translations, 121.

Hook, Dr., 151-179.

Hope, A. J. Beresford, 13.

Hull, Vicar of, 228-230 (Bromby).

— Wilberforce's house, 61.

— Wilberforce memorial, 61.

Huntington, Mr. Frederick, 227.

Huntington, Warden, 293.

JOHNSON, Minor Canon, 258, 295-  
299.

Johnson, Samuel, 104, 122.

Jones of Wales, 131.

KEBLE, John, 187-189, 207.

Kingsley, Charles, 194.

Knowles, Canon, 279.

LAUD, Archbishop, 81.

Lee, Bishop, 9-36.

Lightfoot, Bishop, 31, 247.

Lyttelton, Hon. W. H., 102.

MACFADYEN, Dr., 44.

M'Neill, Dr. Hugh, 28.

Manchester, Old, 300-303.

— Old Church, 248-251.

— Worthies, 300-317.

Manning, Cardinal, 185.

*Marmion*, Scott's, 28.

Martin, Henry, 215.

Martin, Jonathan, 111.

Maurice, Frederick Denison, 185.

Miles Platting, 55.

Monk, Dr. W. H., 238.

Moore, Rev. D. C., 11.

Moorhouse, Bishop, 16.

Moultrie, Gerard 198, 203.

Mozley, Rev. T., 156.

NEALE, Dr. J. M., 198-223.

Newman, Cardinal, 195-196.

Nicholas, Emperor, 221.

Nichols, Humphrey, 312-314.

Nihill, Rev. H. D., 64, 205.

OAKLEY, Dean, 262.

Occleston, Dr., 35.

Oldfield Lane Doctor, 53, 54.

Ouseley, Sir Frederick Gore, 238.

Owens College, 35.

PARKINSON, Dr., 263-282.

Pembrokeshire, antiquities and beauties, 129-131.

— Remoteness, 107, 108.

Perowne, Bishop, 86, 102.

Phillpotts, Bishop, 15, 111.

Pilkington, George, 304-307.

Plumtre, Dean, 185, 186.

Pole, Cardinal, 172, 173.

Powys, Bishop, 313, 314.

QUEEN, how to preach before, 73.

RAINES, Canon, 269.

Ranke, Leopold, 168, 169.

Roch, N. A., 179.

Rose, Hugh James, 184.

ST. BEES, 263, 264.

— College, 266-271.

— Legend, 265.

— Wordsworth on, 265.

St. David's, 79, 108.

— Cathedral, 130.

— Diocese, 131.

St. James's Square, 21, 22.

Scholefield, Professor, 233.

Scott, Sir Walter, 49, 273.

Scott, Rev. William, 13.

Sedgwick, Professor, 112, 134.

Sennachērib or Sennachērib, 260.

Shaftesbury, Lord, 160.

Shelmerdine, Mr., 313.

Shilleto, Richard, 215.

Simeon, Charles, 215.

Simms, Charles S., 282.

Smith of Gurfreston, 129-150.

Southey, 112, 274.

Stainer, Sir John, 238, 239.

Stanley, Dean, 38, 104-106.

Stevens, Rev. W. R. W., 151.

Stokes, Rev. L., 81.

Stowell, Canon, 27, 28.

Sumner, Archbishop, 267, 268.

TAIT, Archbishop, 242.

Talfourd, Judge, 159.

Temple, Bishop, 38.

Tenby, 32, 87, 90.

Thackeray, W. M., 184.

Thompson, Sir William, 234.

Thomson, Archbishop, 279.

*Times* newspaper, 106.

*Tristram Shandy*, 259.

VAUGHAN, Dean, 11, 18, 20.

WESTCOTT, Bishop, 22-26, 31, 32-34.

Westmore, Minor Canon, 280, 289.

Woodford, Bishop, 17.

Woodhouse, Canon, 279.

Wray, Canon, 256, 261, 283-294, 296, 307.

YORKSHIREMEN, humours of, 163-166.

— Love of music, 162.







